

# design for collaborative minds

a visual designers contribution to  
the collaborative consumption model

A Master's Thesis by Sarun Pinyarat  
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“We are not self-made.  
We are dependent on  
one another. Admitting  
this to ourselves isn’t an  
embrace of mediocrity  
and derivativeness, it’s  
a liberation from our  
misconceptions.”

–Kirby Ferguson

(quoted from his talk, *Embrace the Remix*  
at TEDGlobal, June 2012)

For those fighting to make this world a better place,  
I wholeheartedly salute you.

For everyone who has come into my life and makes  
me the person I am, I thank you.

For mother, the most important person in my life,  
I love you.



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# intro- duction

Environmental, consumption, and capital economic crises. These calamities have been circulating in my mind since my BA Final project on climate change in 2007. The more I learn the more I realize that we designers, consciously or not, actually play a pivotally responsible role in them.

1. van der Velden (2006)

Many of the design school models today are for the most part still based on the Ulm School of Design (1953–1968), an offspring of the Bauhaus (1919–1933.), the differences between then and now being that instead of an autonomous, artistic approach to design and creativity, Ulm approached it with questions of usability, identity and marketing, putting every design decision to test against measurable, objective criteria.

Design has to work. But for whom? For the client, for the industry, we were taught. This made perfect sense in the mid 50's when there were real problems, real needs to produce commodities and to boost economies after World War II. Designers were trained to be loyal servants to industry, and industry to society, and this has remained true since.

But things gradually changed. Gone is the age of society-serving industry; emerged is the marketing-led industry of endless capitalist cravings to generate indefinite, unsustainable economic growth in a hyper-consumption society, while making people miserable and killing the planet along the way. And we designers were serving this system, believing we were still 'helping' the industry and the society. In 2006, Daniel van der Velden, METAHAVEN graphic designer, researcher and co-founder wrote,

*"We no longer have any desire for design that is driven by needs... The Porsche Cayenne brings you home, but any car will do the same..."*

*If design is in fact the aesthetic refinement of an invention, then there is room for debate about what the 'design problem' is."*

Van der Velden argues that the 'problems' designers face today are neither social nor scientific anymore. Design has become merely a profit generating tool. Taking this as my starting point, I started to question that if designers could play a part in driving this unsustainable system, would it not be possible that we can also contribute to a reverse? What if we desert this old system and help steer a newer, better, more sustainable system?

I came across the term COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION from a remarkable book 'What's Mine is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption' by Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers. Collaborative consumption is a healthier consumption model for nature, humans and economics. In their words, it "describes the rapid explosion in traditional sharing, bartering, lending, trading, renting, gifting, and swapping reinvented through network technologies

on a scale and in ways never possible before.”<sup>2</sup> After reading the book, I became confident this is the new system I had been searching for.

As collaborative consumption is something rather new I found that there has not yet been much writing or research on it, especially from a designers’ perspective. I saw this as an opportunity to contribute my time and energy to study this new system through my own MA Graphic Design thesis. The research question sprang from my eagerness to explore: ‘How can visual designers contribute to collaborative consumption services?’

In order to find answers to the research question, I formulated a methodology based on literature reviews.

First, I analyzed existing successful collaborative consumption case studies to identify how they visually communicate and operate. The analysis was conducted using a 6-POINT ANALYSIS framework, based on professor of marketing Kevin Keller’s ESSENTIAL BRAND BUILDING BLOCKS.

Secondly, I exhibited the experience and process from two commissioned collaborative consumption projects I had been involved with as a visual designer. Finally, the findings from these two methods formulated an outcome which answered the research question. The outcome takes the form of a guideline booklet entitled, ‘A Visual Designer’s Guideline to Collaborative Consumption Services.’

This thesis aims to achieve four objectives:

1. To explain, based on a literature review, how and why collaborative consumption is a healthier and more sustainable system than the present one.
2. To advocate entrepreneurs and designers to participate in changing the system by showing why collaborative consumption services are innovative and appealing business opportunities for the future.
3. To demonstrate basic guidelines for team members, especially visual designers, to enhance collaborative consumption services.
4. To contribute to the growth of knowledge for a collaborative consumption community.

# chapter one on consumption

This first chapter covers a brief historical background of different consumption models from different periods through a literature review. The chapter is divided into 3 parts: the past, the present, and the future. The past concisely runs through the history of consumption from pre-history up to the industrial revolution. The present explains our societies' current consumption model—hyper consumption. Thirdly, the future introduces a rising phenomenon that could be the alternative consumption model of the future—collaborative consumption. Emphasis in this chapter is on hyper and collaborative consumption, covering its history, effects and mechanisms in detail.

The aims of this chapter are to present evidence from the subject literature that the current hyper consumption model is highly unsustainable for nature, humans and economies, and that collaborative consumption is a healthier, more sustainable model.

## THE PAST

### Consumption from Pre-history to the Industrial Revolution

Living organisms, including human, needs to consume to survive. At the fundamental level, we need food, water, clothing and shelter to sustain our lives. The earliest humans probably lived primarily by scavenging, but then we slowly evolved into hunter-gatherer societies around 1.8 million years ago.<sup>1</sup>

During this period, cooperation was key to man's consumption. During the Stone Age, our Palaeolithic ancestors gathered in tribes or bands of approximately twenty-five to one hundred people and survived the harsh environment by gathering plants and hunting wild animals in packs.<sup>2</sup> Chances of survival (and filling the stomach) is much greater if they hunted and foraged cooperatively. Cooperative efforts continued throughout recorded history. Babylonian farmers relied on each other to share equipment, build barns, harvest crops and even defend the land in agricultural societies, as much as 10,000 years ago.

Another traditional form of collaboration is **BARTERING**, which can be traced back to 6000 BC. It is a method adopted by people to exchange services and goods. People used to exchange their own goods or services for the goods or services of others in return, e.g., I give some fish I caught in exchange for those straw shoes of yours. But such arrangements take time, as communities grew larger and more complex, currency slowly replaced the bartering model and becoming the central consumption mechanism. In 600 B.C., Lydia's King Alyattes minted the first official currency and money.<sup>3</sup> Since then, money has performed as a medium of exchange for goods and services

1. Marlowe (2005)
2. McClellan (2006)
3. Beattie (2012)



4. *Industrial Revolution* (2012)  
5. Veblen (1899)  
6. Shade (2006, p.25)

without having to make direct contacts.

Fast-forwarding to the industrial revolution, which took place during the 18th and 19th centuries. It was a period during which the predominantly agrarian, rural societies in Europe and America became industrial and urban. Prior to this, commodities were often produced in people’s homes, using hand tools or -basic machines and were scarce, since production couldn’t meet the population’s consumption demand. The industrial revolution brought about a greater volume and variety of factory-produced goods and raised the -standard of living for many people, particularly the middle and upper classes.<sup>4</sup>

THE PRESENT  
Hyper Consumption

HISTORY

While commodity consumption became more and more accessible due to the industrial revolution, new kinds of consumptions also emerged. In 1899, Thorstein Veblen, a Norwegian economist and sociologist coined the term CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION, describing the activity of the ‘leisured class’ in spending of money for, and the acquisition of luxury goods and services to publicly display their economic and social power.<sup>5</sup> There also developed INVIDIOUS CONSUMPTION, a form of conspicuous consumption that deliberately provokes envy in others who can’t afford the same kind of goods. These particular types of consumption have stayed and evolved. Today, we may call it COOL-HUNTING (see page 20.)

With high production efficiency together with thought-to-be limitless natural resources, THROWAWAY CONSUMPTION was born. In 1907, Hugh Moore and Lawrence Luellen introduced the paper cup vending machine for the first time to fix the problem of diseases spreading from sharing the same tin cup from the public water fountain. By promoting as the cup for clinical use with better sanitary, the world was first introduced to the first disposable product. For manufacturers, a product that is thrown away after being used, forcing the customer to keep coming back for more, potentially create endless profit.<sup>6</sup>

After World War I, when there was a genuine need to find new uses for the abundance of material leftover from the war, disposable method played a big role. For example, an absorbent material made from celluloid used for military bandage was transformed into disposable Kotex sanitary towel. Apart from this, manufacturers wanted to figure out a way to lure people out to consume more after the wartime ethic of thrift and reuse left a guilty feeling that restrained them from spending. During the war, the US

government were used the slogan ‘Waste Not, Want Not’, but by 1917, it was changed to ‘Beware of Thrift and Unwise Economy’ to help encourage repetitive consumption.<sup>7</sup>

Thirty eight years later, in 1955, Life magazine ran an article with the title “Throwaway Living” and a photo of a family tossing various disposable products into the air (image 1), smiling happily. Disposable consumption had become the new definition of a modern lifestyle. Disposability would later on evolve into other products that were then built to last, such as light-bulbs, computers and even cars. This method is known today as PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE (see page 19.)

The period from the 1920s and 1950s was when excessive mass consumption exploded. Many Americans feared that the end of World War II and the subsequent drop in military spending might bring back the hard times of THE GREAT DEPRESSION. But instead, pent-up consumer demand fueled exceptionally strong economic growth in the post war period. The automobile industry successfully converted back to producing cars, and new industries such as aviation and electronics grew by leaps and bounds.<sup>8</sup> Victor Lebow, economist and retail analyst, wrote ‘Price Competition in 1955’, and in it he said that economics demanded Americans make consumption into a way of life, “convert the buying and use of goods into rituals”, and that they should seek “spiritual satisfaction” and “ego satisfaction” in consumption. He added that the country “need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced, and discarded at an ever increasing rate.”<sup>9</sup>

During the same period, the chairman of President Eisenhower’s Council of Economic Advisors stated, “The American economy’s ultimate purpose is to produce more consumer goods.”<sup>10</sup> By 1970s, consumption had taken a leading role both culturally and economically.

Consumption, shopping had been presented as a cure all in America, so much so that in the wake of the 9/11 tragedy, President George W. Bush included shopping in the daily activities that he said were the “ultimate repudiation of terrorism.”<sup>11</sup> In synchronization with Bush, there seems a consensus among politicians and economists that shopping is one of American’s duties—not to buy means to fail the workers and stifle the economy.

It has become almost unquestioned that consumption is the only way to go about ‘growing’ an economy and making life happier. Around the world, GDP has become the ultimate index of country’s prosperity. We have become addicted to this consumption pattern. Psychologists term this CONSUMPTION LOCK-IN, as it can be difficult to make deliberate choices about what to buy

7. Strasser (1999)  
8. Conte and Carr (2001)  
9. Lebow (1955)  
10. Eisenhower cited in Seager (1993)  
11. The speech was made in Atlanta, November 8, 2001.



image 1 Photographic image used for a Life Magazine article, August issue, 1955.



12. Jordan (2008)

13. *State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society* (2004)

14. Layard (2005, p.29–35)

15. Ibid.

16. Lane (2000, p. 13)

and what not to buy. Habits, routines, social norms and cultural values have locked us into this endless all-consuming merry-go-round, so much so that we are unaware of the collective destructive consequences it may cause. As artist and cultural activist Chris Jordan put it

“As individuals, we do things all the time everyday. But when millions of people go about these unconscious behaviors, it can add up to a catastrophic consequence that nobody wants, and that nobody intends.”<sup>12</sup>

This then is the state of our society today—a hyper consumption society.

EFFECTS

While hyper consumption was born out of good will, genuine fear of economic depression, and succeeded in boosting the post World War II economies, it has since created many unintended negative consequences to nature, humans and economics.

*Effects on Humans.* Economic growth, driven by hyper consumption, promises us prosperity, wealth and happiness. But it has failed to deliver. On the contrary, it is one of the main reasons now why the society is so unhappy.

As mentioned earlier, consumption is vital for survival. Inadequate consumption, e.g., not enough food, can make us very unhappy (hungry, starving, or dead). But once people’s basic needs are met, approximately earning and consuming about 13,000 U.S. dollars per year<sup>13</sup>, the marginal increase in happiness we get from acquiring more goods actually decreases.<sup>14</sup> For instance, the first or second pair of shoes you own will likely to make you happier than the fifth or sixth.

Research on the relationship between growth, consumption and happiness by an economist, Richard Layard, has found that the level of happiness using this kind of analysis peaked in the U.S. during 1957 (about 35 percent of the U.S. citizen described themselves as ‘very happy’), but that level has never been reached again<sup>15</sup>. It is interesting to observe that the timing also coincides with when hyper consumption was expanding most rapidly—nothing would ever be enough. Political Scientist Robert Lance commented, “The appetite of our present materials depends upon stirring up our wants - but not satisfying them.”<sup>16</sup> It is like trying to fill a glass with water, not knowing that there is a hole in the bottom.

Susan Fournier and Michael Guiry, former associate marketing professors at Harvard Business School, conducted a study called Consumption Dreaming Activity. They asked participants, ‘What things would you like to own or do someday?’ Contrary to their expectations, the results varied little regardless of

participants’ sex, income, education or standard of living. Almost half of the sample (44 per cent) mentioned new cars; more than a quarter (29 per cent) listed luxury items such as yachts, antiques, jewelry and designer clothes, and around 16 per cent just ask for money—enough to buy everything they could possibly want.<sup>17</sup> The result is worrying, as Tim Kasser, Knox College professor of psychology, who has written extensively about materialism, pointed out. It’s not just that money can’t buy us love and ‘stuffs’ can’t make us happy, but that materialism can actually make us unhappy. He said,

*“The studies document that strong materialistic values are associated with a pervasive undermining of people’s well-being, from low life satisfaction to happiness, to depression and anxiety, to physical problems such as headaches and to personality disorders, narcissism and antisocial behavior.”<sup>18</sup>*

Endless material desires creates a heavy burden to make money to quench the thirst. On a micro level, an individual trying to make more money needs to work longer hours, which may well add to stress, fatigue, depression, less leisure time and isolation. On a macro level, the paradox of whether or not to join the hyper consumption model is very interesting. Until 1913, it took a worker 12.5 hours to make an automobile chassis; by 1914 it took 1.5 hours.<sup>19</sup> This sudden great change was the result of Ford’s production-line techniques. The cost of producing one megabit of computing power in 1970 was about \$20,000.00 U.S.; by 2001, the cost had sunk to just two cents—\$0.002 U.S.<sup>20</sup>

With massive increase in productivity, industrialized countries face two choices: keep producing roughly the same amount of things to for the market as before and work far less hours, or keep working the same number of hours and produce much more. While countries such as the U.S. the U.K. and South Korea chose the latter, trying to indefinitely expand their economies, European countries like Finland, Norway and France chose the former, resulting in much less working hours per year per employee (image 2.)

More working hours mean less time to spend on civic engagement and community building. In ‘Bowling Alone’, Harvard professor Robert Putnam chronicles the decline in participation in social and civic groups, ranging from bowling leagues to parent-teacher associations.<sup>21</sup> Many people end up with fewer friends, fewer supportive neighbors, less robust communities and near total apathy about their role in the democratic political model.

Increasingly, people are too busy to help out their neighbor by watching over their dogs, giving a ride to the airport, or buying drugs when they are sick. We have become isolated islands living in boxes. I have had the same experience living in a gigantic apartment complex in the heart of

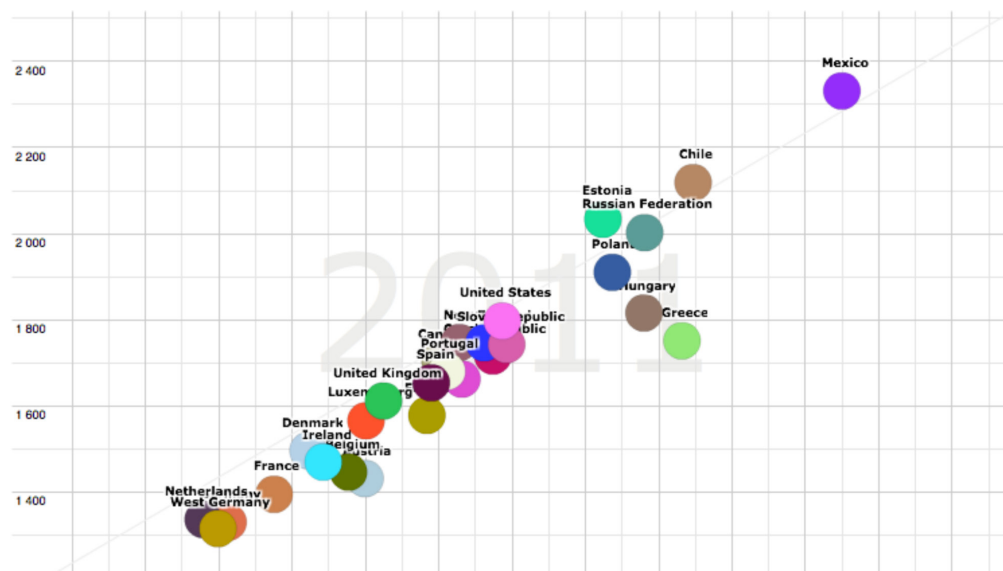
17. Fournier and Guiry (1993)

18. Kasser (2003, p.22)

19. *State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society* (2004, p.12)

20. Ibid.

21. Putnam (2000)



**Image 2** A Chart displaying average working hours per year in each countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], [www.oecd.org/](http://www.oecd.org/))

22. Benefit Dating Spread in Hong Kong (2009)

Bangkok, knowing absolutely none of my neighbors. Since we still have a need for these things, the market supplies us with paid alternatives. We can hire someone to watch our pets, coach us through a rough break-up and, sadly, to entertain our children.

Another worrying aspect comes from those who do not have the financial resources but also want to acquire those new, branded and luxurious objects, so much so that they will do whatever it takes.

The DPA news agency in 2009 reported of a poll result conducted with Hong Kong students on the subject of 'benefit dating', or prostitution for luxury brand goods.<sup>22</sup> It said that 10% believed such activities existed in their school, with 6.6% saying they actually were friend with those girls. 87% of the 3,000 interviewees believed that the girls engaging in 'benefit dating' are purely driven by material desires.

The same report also suggested that the trend had spread from Japan to Hong Kong, where a recent case of 19-year-old girl being arrested after the video clip of her giving oral sex to an old man on the bus for 25 U.S. dollars spread across the internet. The girl admitted saving up the money to buy a Gucci bag.

A similar case also exists in Thailand. Research by Professor Somdej Rong-ngsrisawas of Rajaphat Suan-sunandha University on 'Thai Teenagers and Internet Prostitution' concluded that 10% of Thai female teenagers have had, or thought about internet prostitution, 11% believing that their class mates

have engaged it. While 20% of the male teenagers have actually engaged in internet prostitution. On average, the female teenagers can earn around 20,000 - 30,000 baht (approximately 500 - 600 euros) per month, having sex about 8 - 10 times with regular customers. The main reason given was that the brand-name items or mobile phones they want are too pricey to ask their parents.<sup>23</sup>

Many illegal activities are also related to material desires, be it gambling, stealing, drug-dealing or even murder. Hyper consumption is deteriorating us as human beings, lowering our compassion with material greed. The following case gives an extreme example.

On Friday 28 November 2008 (BLACK FRIDAY), a two-thousand-plus crowd had gathered in front of the Walmart in Valley Stream, New York waiting for the store to open for its first day. By the opening time at 5 a.m., the crowd was shouting 'Push the doors in.' Jdimytai Damour, a thirty-four-year-old temporary security guard from Haiti, responsible for opening the door, was stepped on by the massive crowd once the doors opened. He was pronounced dead by asphyxiation just after 6 a.m. – he had been trampled to death. The most unbelievable thing was that when the police declared the shop closed as a crime scene, some people kept on shopping. They even complained and yelled, 'I've been queuing since yesterday!' The next day when this very same Walmart opened, the crowds lined up as usual. An employee in the electronics department at the time of Damour's death reportedly commented, 'It was crazy... the deals weren't even that good.'<sup>24</sup>

*Effects on Nature.* It was 3 August 1997 when Charles Moore, a sailor and environmentalist, on his way home from a Los Angeles-to-Hawaii race, was sailing across the North Pacific Sub-tropical Gyre. In the week it took him and the crew to cross the Gyre, they were astonished to find themselves surrounded by large floating rubbish in such a desolated place, thousands of mile from land. What Moore and his crew discovered was to be known as 'The Great Pacific Garbage Patch', the largest landfill (or more like waterfill) in the world. It is roughly about twice the size of Texas and in some parts more than 30 meters deep. It is a floating stew of around 3.5 million tons of garbage, 90 per cent of which is plastic.<sup>25</sup>

Moore described the Gyre, "As I gazed from the deck at the surface of what ought to have been a pristine ocean, I was confronted, as far as the eye could see, with the sight of plastic."<sup>26</sup>

This vast overloading chunk of garbage pollutes the ocean, making it un-

23. Report on 'Thai Teenager and Internet Prostitution' research (2011)

24. Leonard (2010, p.144-145)

25. Silverman (2007)

26. Botsman and Rogers (2011, p. 4)



27. Environmental Protection Agency (2012)

28. Hawken (1999, p.4)

29. ETOPO1 Global Relief Model (2012)

inhabitable for ocean creatures. Fish and birds mistake the plastic for food, especially the bottle caps, which Moore calls ‘poison pills’. One bird, when dissected, contained 1,603 pieces of plastic. Since it’s no man’s land, and because we can’t see it in our backyards, nobody is trying to be responsible for it. It’s a big dump in the ocean that can’t be flushed (image 3-5.)

Sadly, the Gyre is not the only wasteland in the world. In Mexico, Bordo Poneinte Landfill used to take around 12,000 tons of garbage a day before it closure, but garbage is still being dumped there due to lack of alternative. The dump in Lagos, Nigeria takes in almost 10,000 tons of solid waste daily and a considerable amount of electronic-waste (e-waste) from the 500 container ships that dump on its grounds monthly. Chemically-stripping e-waste for precious metals produces toxic fumes. Since opening in 1992, Sudokwon Landfill in South Korea has collected 88 million tons of waste. It averages 20,000 tons of waste per day–6.3 million tons per year. The biggest landfill in the U.S., Puente Hills, rising 150 meters high covering 2.8 square kilometers with four million tons of garbage, approximately 10,300 tons per day.<sup>27</sup>

The environmental impact of landfill sites varies depending on how well they’re managed and resourced. However, typical problems include the contamination of soil and groundwater from toxic residues; the release of methane, a greenhouse gas produced during the decaying process that is more potent than carbon dioxide (which also fouls the air, affecting all living organism living close by), and disease-carrying pests. Worst of all, it’s a waste of the resources and energy wasted in the process to produce all these thrown away things. The amount of waste matter generated in the manufacture of a single laptop computer, for example, is close to four thousand times its weight.<sup>28</sup>

We know we are living on a planet with finite resources. Unfortunately, when humans get used to something for a while, we begin taking things for granted. It is so easy to forget that this Earth is the only planet we have got to sustain our lives, that is exactly 510,082,000 sq. km., about one third of which is land.<sup>29</sup> This is it. There actually is a limit to the amount of land, water, air, minerals, and other resources provided by Earth. But by the look of how we consume the resources, it seems many people don’t know or simply ignore this fact.

A child born today into a middle-class American family will live about eighty years and consume on average 2.5 million liters of water, the wood of 1,000 trees, 21,000 tons of petrol, 220,000 kilos of steel and 80,000 watts of electrical energy. At these rates, each American child will consume in his or her lifetime the equivalent to:

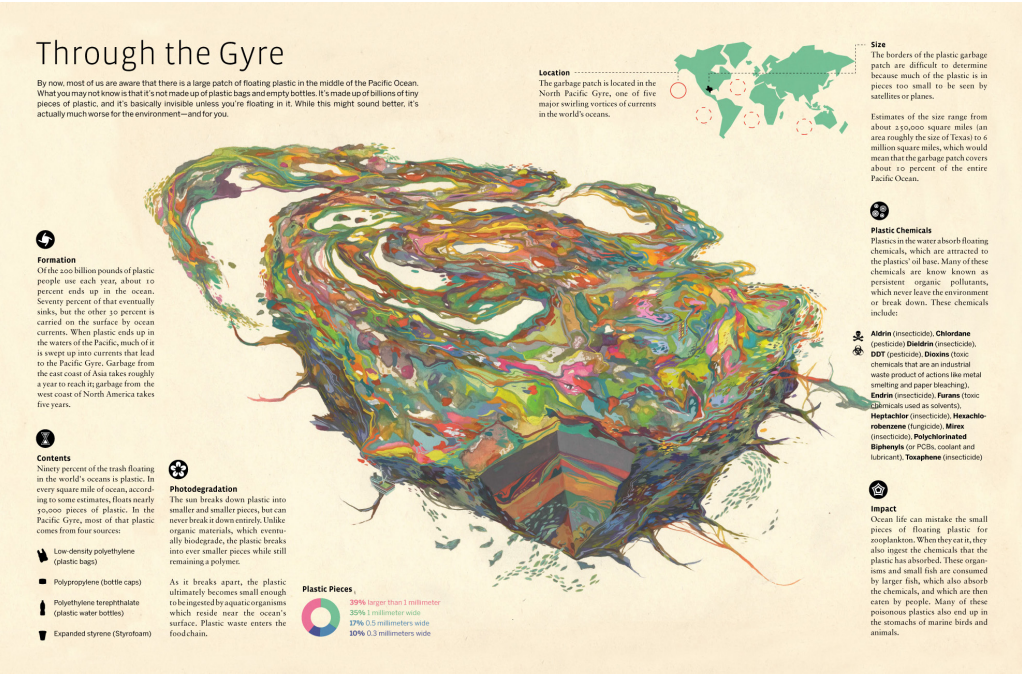


Image 3 (top) Infographics on the Gyre by GOOD magazine, illustrated by Jacob Magraw-Mickelson ([www.good.is/posts/transparency-the-great-pacific-garbage-patch/](http://www.good.is/posts/transparency-the-great-pacific-garbage-patch/))



Image 4 and 5 (left) Photographs of the Gyre in the Pacific ocean.

30. Global Footprint Network and WWF's Living Planet Report (2009)

31. Advancing the Science of Climate Change (2001, p.2)

32. Global Climate Change (2012)

2 Swedish children, or  
3 Italians,  
13 Indians,  
35 Brazilians,  
and 106 Haitians.

If every new born child in the world were to live this ‘American lifestyle’, we would need around 5 planets to sustain the consumption.<sup>30</sup> The harsh truth is we have only the one.

Not only are we reaching the limits of resources, we are also reaching the limits from the production of waste. One of the main concerns from this is the emission of massive amounts of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the atmosphere, causing climate change. Various reports and scientific findings point in the same direction: “Climate change is occurring, is caused largely by human activities, and poses significant risks for – and in many cases is already affecting—a broad range of human and natural models”<sup>31</sup>, and today climate change has already had observable effects on the environment.

Glaciers have shrunk, ice on rivers and lakes is breaking up earlier each spring, plant and animal habitats have shifted and trees are flowering sooner. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which includes more than 1,300 scientists from the U.S. and other countries admits that, “Taken as a whole, the range of published evidence indicates that the net damage costs of climate change are likely to be significant and to increase over time.”<sup>32</sup>

In July 2009, we reached 387.81 parts per million (PPM) of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. Scientists have identified 350 ppm as the maximum level that the atmosphere can sustain the planet as we know it. Yet, with the hyper

Global Climate Change Future Trends (NASA Climate)

PHENOMENA	LIKELIHOOD TO HAPPEN
- Cold days, cold nights and frost less frequent over land areas	Very likely
- More frequent hot days and nights	Very likely
- Heat waves more frequent over most land areas	Likely
- Increased incidence of extreme high sea level	Likely
- Global area affected by drought has increased (since 1970s)	Likely in some regions
-Increase in intense tropical cyclone activity in North Atlantic (since 1970)	Likely in some regions

consumption model driving economics, we are now producing more than five times the level of CO<sub>2</sub> emission to which we have to reduce by 2050 in order to avoid total climate chaos. Hyper consumption may already have altered the planet irreparably.

*Effects on Economics.* With terms like ‘nation’s prosperity’, ‘significance of our lives’, ‘special urgency’ or even ‘repudiation to terrorism’ being the mind set linked to it, there can be little wonder that in the U.S. people worship hyper consumption. Valuing economic growth and ultimately ‘wealth to the nation and everyone’ so highly, it has become so sacred that no one dares to think otherwise. As Annie Leonard wrote, “...in the United States, we’re still hesitant to broach this unmentionable subject, fearful of being labeled unpatriotic, unrealistic or insane... That’s because in other countries, capitalism is seen as one option among many, whereas in the United States it’s considered an inevitability.”<sup>33</sup>

This, together with the ultimate capitalist index that indicates growth–Gross Domestic Product (GDP)–can divert people from seeing or questioning the consequences of such model. GDP is an indication of the monetary value of goods and services made in a country each year. But does that really account for a nation’s or society’s success? Certainly, yes, for capitalist politicians and economists. Yet, in reality, is this the complete picture?

Firstly, GDP does not take account of how the wealth is actually distributed–if it is any way fair or equal. That’s why the GDP of a country can keep rising at a good 2-3 percent a year for a period of time but most people’s income stay pretty much the same. This is because wealth tends to get stuck somewhere in the, mostly at the top, with those already rich. The same rich people that have cooperate power to influence decision making in government. If the model works in their favour, GDP growth is promoted to such an extent that most people blindly think that they and the nation are doing well.

Secondly, GDP does not take into account ecological and social costs. By ramping up industry’s production, it may exploit other resources, like polluting the air and water, child labour or forcing workers to overwork. These factors are never taken into the calculation. Neither does this sacred measure of growth take health care, education or life satisfaction into account.

Lastly, while it may be true for under-developed and developing countries that GDP growth can actually indicate people’s well-being and happiness. At a certain point, that stops. GDP growth may actually just creates the opposite of happiness. An infinite growth model for all economies can not work on a finite Earth with limited resources and a fast growing population. Infinite growth does not bring infinite happiness.

33. Leonard (2010, p.xxii)



## MECHANISMS

Thinking of all the effects and crises hyper consumption has created, one must wonder that people participate in a model that is killing both us and the planet so voluntarily. To answer this question, we have to understand the various mechanisms which were carefully planned and designed for people to fall for it, without realizing the consequences. The mechanisms associated with designers are PERCEIVED OBSOLESCENCE, PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE, and COOL-HUNTING, while the last mechanism—CREDIT—is invented by capitalists.

*Perceived Obsolescence.* There are various forms of perceived obsolescence, but they all share the same characteristic—it renders a thing obsolete in the perception of the user even though it still functions. One outstanding example is fashion.

Every year, the ‘players’ in the fashion industry gather together to decide on what the trend will be in the future, mostly 3-4 fashion cycles ahead, so that it can be distributed and implemented in time. Simply put: they decide when and what you ‘need’ to go out and buy. [WWW.TRENDLESS.ORG](http://WWW.TRENDLESS.ORG), an independent online fashion magazine, explains that the system starts with cooperation between fashion forecasters like WSGN ([www.wgsn.com](http://www.wgsn.com)), color palette predictors like Pantone and independent researchers. Together, they carefully observe world events, people, moods, lifestyle and fashion that “has even a slight significance”<sup>34</sup> both locally and globally. The end result is a very expensive report which outlines the key fashion directions for the upcoming periods. As we are now in 2012, these so-called trendsetters are already working on Sprint/Summer 2013 and Autumn/Winter 2013-14, almost two years ahead of time.

Then the textile industries and fashion houses follow that particular trend to produce garments that fit seamlessly across the industry. Promoters, like fashion magazines, then put models wearing those ‘trendy’ garments on the cover to let people know what is ‘in’ and ‘out’. Consumers follow that trend, and the next thing we know everyone is wearing slim high-heels. Those who don’t are ‘out’.

This creates the pressure (or by a psychological reversal even pleasure) to buy new, even though the old still works. The thing is that these trends are endless and cyclical. They come and they go and they come again, a perfect solution for the economics of indefinite growth.

Another industry that is worth mentioning is electronics. All those updates

on faster processors, more memory, more storage simply making whatever machine we own look as slow and old as a turtle. And these updates just kept coming more rapidly. Ever wonder how much faster can these things actually go? Dual-core? Quad-core? 24-core? There is no end to this.

What bothers me most about perceived obsolescence is that my own profession plays a big part in this, especially within advertising. We graphic designers, are skilled in delivering acute messages to hit straight to the heart and mind of the audience, using a perfect combination of words and images to create the fear (of present state) and desire (to be in a better state) to buy.

*Planned Obsolescence.* Planned obsolescence is a design that deliberately shorten the life of things, and most of the time making them unfixable. This is an offspring from disposable designs, as mentioned earlier.

Planned obsolescence is a concept first suggested not by an economist, a manufacturer or an advertiser, but by a real estate broker, Bernard London. In 1932, he wrote ‘Ending the Depression Through Planned Obsolescence’. London proposed starting a government agency that would determine the LEASE OF LIFE of every manufactured product, be it a car, a light bulb, a ship or even a building. After the allotted time, the product would be ‘legally dead’, and if anyone wish to continue using, they would have to pay a penalty tax. Otherwise, they would give up the item and be paid part of the price for a new one.<sup>35</sup> Even though this proposal was never taken up, manufacturers took the concept and adapted it to fit their demand for profit.

One example of this is the LIGHT BULB CONSPIRACY.<sup>36</sup> The light bulb conspiracy was a describes an event during the 1920s when the leading light bulb manufacturers formed the international Phoebus cartel with the declared purpose to standardize light bulbs (e.g. the E27 connectors.) It was suspected that the primary goal of Phoebus was not to develop international standards but instead to reduce the lifetime of light bulbs. It was noted that before 1924, said lifetime expectancy of a bulb was slightly above 2,000 hours. To increase demand and hence profit, Phoebus members agreed to halve the life expectancy of all their bulbs by using lower-quality materials and production methods. The life expectancy decline was conducted gradually until the cartel’s dissolution to avoid drawing public attention. By the 1940s, bulbs were burning for 1,000 hours, which is still their expected lifespan today.<sup>37</sup>

With today’s cutting edge technology, machines can easily be built to last, parts made fixable and repairable, but that was not to be the case, even for a legendary product like the first generation iPod. Consumers praise the iPod for its ease of operation and design. Yet, in one important dimension the

35. London (1932)

36. Dannoritzer (2010)

37. Ibid.

38. Strausz (2008)

39. A classic example of the prisoner’s dilemma is presented as follows:

*Two men are arrested, but the police do not possess enough information for a conviction. Following the separation of the two men, the police offer both a similar deal—if one testifies against his partner (defects/ betrays), and the other remains silent (cooperates/assists), the betrayer goes free and the one that remains silent receives the full one-year sentence. If both remain silent, both are sentenced to only one month in jail for a minor charge. If each ‘rats out’ the other, each receives a three-month sentence.*

*Each prisoner must choose either to betray or remain silent; the decision of each is kept quiet. What should they do? If it is supposed here that each player is only concerned with lessening his time in jail, the game becomes a non-zero sum game where the two players may either assist or betray the other. In the game, the sole worry of the prisoners seems to be increasing his own reward.*

*The interesting symmetry of this problem is that the logical decision leads each to betray the other, even though their individual ‘prize’ would be greater if they cooperated.*

40. Heath and Potter (2004)

iPod’s quality is lacking – fixability. In 2003 Apple acknowledged that the iPod’s battery has a limited lifetime and is not replaceable. After failure an owner must buy a new device or use Apple’s expensive out-of-warranty battery replacement program. The company defends its high fee by explaining that, by design, it is cheaper to exchange the physical device than to replace only the battery.<sup>38</sup> Although consumers are now well aware of the limited lifetime, Apple remains ardently committed to the irreplaceable battery in its future product generations.

This practice is becoming more common in today’s business, and people are accepting this as a norm.

**Cool-hunting.** In ‘The Theory of the Leisure Class’, Veblen suggested that conspicuous consumption is born of competitive consumers. One way to explain this is through the psychological game, THE PRISONER’S DILEMMA.

The Prisoner’s Dilemma is a canonical game analyzed in game theory that shows why two individuals might not cooperate, even if it appears that it is in their best interests to do so.<sup>39</sup>

Cool-hunting is a term describing a ‘prison’ of conspicuous consumption on a massive scale in which citizens of all classes, voluntarily or not, are stuck. In the book ‘The Rebel Sale’, Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter brilliantly illustrate an example of how the ‘prisoner’s dilemma’ is integrated into cool-hunting:

*“... to see how this argument works, consider the case of two doctors, each of whom drives to work in a modest Honda sedan... They know that patients are likely to be suspicious of a doctor who doesn’t drive at least a BMW...*

*In this way, it is easy for either doctor to talk himself into buying the BMW. But does it improve business? If every doctors run out and buys a BMW, then patients still have no basis for choosing one doctor over another.”<sup>40</sup>*

Heath and Potter conclude that all doctors will end up spending more on car payments without gaining any significant advantages over the other. What they then may do is to buy even more expensive cars, but that will once again force others to do the same. It is a situation in which everyone winds up where they started with no overall increase in happiness.

From this example, it is clear that if the doctors agree to drive a Honda sedan (the ‘prisoners’ agree to stay silent), every doctor would be better off, saving money. Their consumption decisions do not generate long-

lasting happiness. This is not only because they fall into the trap of perceived obsolescence, they are also stuck with peer-pressure competition they may not realize and may not see a way out of.

According to Fred Hirsch, the author of ‘The Social Limits to Growth’, economic growth in our society (increasing GDP), rather than reducing the frustration of the middle classes, has tended rather to increase it. Early industrialization created unrealistic expectations by permitting the population at large to enjoy many of the privileges that had once been reserved for the wealthy through the development of ‘free time’ (or leisure time, as Veblen put it), which separates the working hours<sup>41</sup> so that people can actually have some time to spend money, and thus enter ‘the competition’. Unfortunately, by the time you can afford a Gucci bag, the world will have moved on to Prada. By the time you can afford an Armani suit, Canali will be the next cool thing to hunt.

**Credit.** When it seems like a financial stretch to follow all the latest cool things, credit cards come to the rescue. Credit is the lubricant of the hyper consumption model by doing two things: one, it makes people want to spend more (even though they might not be able to afford it); and two, it enables people to spend mindlessly faster.

MIT economists Drazen Prelec and Duncan Simester conducted a study in 2001 on real bids for real commodities.<sup>42</sup> MBA students participated in two ticket auctions for baseball games. The student volunteers were handed a sheet of paper that described the prize and gave instructions on how to record their bids. They were not allowed to discuss or find market prices of the actual tickets in the real world market. Unknown by the students, there were actually two sets of paper handed out. Half the sheets stated that the payment was required by winners in cash, while the other sheet stipulated that payment must be by credit card. The result was that students who agreed to pay with cash bid on average 28.51 U.S. dollars while those who agreed to pay by credit bid on average 60.64 U.S. dollars, a 113 percent difference.

Two other related experiments also pointed to the same result. One showed that when presented with the Master Card logo, people tended to allow themselves to pay more;<sup>43</sup> and the other revealed that of spenders with credit cards, only 35 percent could recall the correct amount they spent, while the remaining stated an amount lower than reality, or simply couldn’t remember at all.<sup>44</sup>

These results illustrate what is going on in our heads when we make a purchase. When cash tangibly leaves our hands, we are more conscious

41. Hirsch (1978)

42. Prelec and Simester (2001)

43. Feinberg (1986)

44. Soman (2001)

45. U.S. exported its aggressive credit card fees worldwide (2009)

that we are spending money than when we use a card. They also show how credit cards make spending ‘less real’, detaching us from the action of actual payment. This is why credit cards have become the ultimate enablers and tranquilizers of shopping.

Between 1989 and 2001, credit card debt nearly tripled, from 238 billion U.S. dollars to 937 billion U.S. dollars. In 2007, it was up to 961 billion U.S. dollars.

As of December 2009 according to USA Today, the following countries were carrying the biggest credit card debt burdens (figures in billions of U.S. dollars.)<sup>45</sup>

US – \$775.0	————— (On average, there are more than
UK – \$87.5	four credit cards for each American)
Canada – \$73.9	
Australia – \$40.4	

The equation is simple: the more credits we have, the more we shop, the more resources are consumed, the more waste is created, and the more debt is put into the world.

WHAT’S NEXT?

Evidence can not be clearer that the hyper consumption model, while born out of good will to boost postwar economies, is the cause of many of the crises we face today. The model is unsustainable, and a solution has to be found. Stopping consumption is simply not possible, as we are so wired into comfort and luxurious lifestyles that few are willing to make such a sacrifice. It’s the prisoner’s dilemma all over again. We all know we have to cut down consumption to save the planet, but we prefer that others should do it first. We simply can’t just stop consumption, but perhaps we can do so alternatively and sustainably. Enter the collaborative consumption model.

THE FUTURE

Collaborative Consumption

HISTORY

As mentioned earlier, cooperation is part of man’s innate nature. Anthropologists believe that mutuality and reciprocity are hardwired human behaviors that serve as the basis for human cooperation and are at the core of our existence. As societies have grown more and more complex, these kinds of direct cooperation inevitably decrease. With millions of inhabitants, direct trading or bartering become unfeasible. Imagine today walking in an urban street trying to swap your belongings with utter strangers. We each work separately

to acquire what we want, using money as the lubricant.

46. McKibben (2008)

47. Mooallem (2009)

48. Ball (2006)

By the 1950s, when hyper consumption really kick-started, we had long perceived ourselves first and foremost as a society of individual consumers rather than a group of citizens, believing that we were better off relying on corporations rather than cooperation.

We have become self-reliant, individual and disconnected. Throughout the fifties and sixties, Americans were encouraged to give up their hobbies, free time, and social time for the choice of bigger cars and better homes.

A recent survey showed that three-quarters of Americans confess they don’t know their next-door neighbors.<sup>46</sup> Also the less time people spent socializing, the more time they spent in the office working for more money, or shopping using the money earned. Consumer culture is pulling us further and further apart.

While we are busy shopping, three occurrences should be noted. One, the world population is increasing exponentially. Two, since shopping has replaced many other social activities and human interactions, we now own more material stuff than ever. Three, while we are disconnected physically, we have become more connected virtually thanks to the internet and other mass media. These three occurrences are the key factors how collaborative consumption were born.

*Critical Mass of Idling Capacity.* More people means more stuff. With an increasing population growing exponentially, it is estimated by the United States Census Bureau (USCB) that there are approximately 7.033 billion humans on Earth today (as of August 2012.)

Under the hyper consumption model, it is not hard to imagine how much stuff is owned by this massive and increasing population. By the early 1990s, American families had, on average, twice as many possessions as families did twenty-five years earlier.<sup>47</sup> However, this large amount of stuff is the very reason why collaborative consumption works – it helps in reaching CRITICAL MASS.

Critical mass as a sociological term is used to describe the existence of enough momentum in a model to make it become self-sustaining.<sup>48</sup> This concept has been applied to an array of fields, from nuclear chain reactions, MP3 online store successes, and the adoption of USB ports.

Critical mass is vital because it generates choices. For collaborative consumption to compete with conventional shopping, there must be enough

choices that a customer feels satisfied. For example, if you go to an unpopular clothes swapping event only to find that all the people in the event are all of a bigger size, you would likely leave the event feeling dissatisfied. However, as the number of people participating in an event increases, the more items they bring with them, and the likelihood of people walking away dissatisfied automatically decreases. At some point, the items in the event will reach a critical mass—enough goods for all to find something they like and to feel that they have chosen well and feel satisfied.

With the abundance of material owned, people can't possibly use everything at the same time. Most items are likely to hang around in the closet, attic or garage, taking up storage spaces. The perfect example is the power drill. A power drill usage is between 6 and 30 minutes in its entire life time. And yet almost every household in the U.S. owns one of these. There are approximately 50 million drills in homes across America sitting in the dust - If thought through carefully, it's not the drill that people really want, it's actually the hole. These almost unused items can be called **IDLING CAPACITY**. But thanks to hyper consumption, there are plenty of these idling capacity available to reach the critical mass. Moreover, idling capacity can also be human skills available to perform valuable services.

*The Internet.* Here is another crucial factor that makes collaborative consumption possible. From 2000 to 2009, the number of Internet users globally rose from 394 million to 1.858 billion. By 2010, 22 percent of the world's population had access to computers with 1 billion Google searches every day, 300 million Internet users reading blogs, and 2 billion videos viewed daily on YouTube.<sup>49</sup>

One thing that the internet enables, that could not be done before on a global scale, is to enable the people of the world to 'do things' together. Clay Shirky, a consultant and teacher on the social and economic effects of internet technologies, explained in a TED talk in 2005 about the internet as the perfect media for both two-way communication and addressing a mass public. He said that there were a total of four major breakthroughs in the history of the media: the printing press, the telephone, the television and the internet. The first three are either good at two-way or one-way communication for mass public. The telephone is great for two-way communication but cannot address a mass public, while the TV is great for sending messages to the mass public, but can only do so one-way.<sup>50</sup>

The internet also helps to eliminate the **DOUBLE COINCIDENCE OF WANTS** issue in a direct exchange system. For example, if you are a designer and you

want to trade your services (A) for legal advice (B) you would need to find a lawyer with an immediate need for new logo design. The supplier of (A) must want (B), while the supplier of (B) must also need (A) at the same time. This is problematic if you imagine the situation in the real world, but the internet eliminates this deficiency. It enables diverse and dispersed individuals and businesses to connect on a global scale and match the (A) with the (B) without needing to know one another or being in the same space. Cooperation can happen with ease.

*The rise to popularity.* With a critical mass of idling capacity and the internet, people can now come together and commence traditional bartering, but this time on a massive scale which can be increased without limit. When the supply and demand are matched, wasted things can be brought back into use, extending use life. This means both saving resources and the environment, and more money left in the wallet.

We are now at the inception of a collaborative consumption era. And it has been growing rapidly.

AirBNB is an online service that matches people seeking vacation rentals and other short-term accommodation with those with rooms to rent, generally private individuals, not professional hoteliers. The site was founded in October 2007 by Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia. Within two years, there were already over 210,000 registered users with more than 28,000 properties across 8,122 cities in more than 157 countries. As of now, there are

- over 10 million nights booked
- over 200,000 listings worldwide
- over 26,000 cities
- 192 countries
- over 168 million Social Connections<sup>51</sup>

The book 'What's Mine is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption' by Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers have elaborated on the phenomenon: "To illustrate the explosive rise of collaborative consumption, let's first look at the growth stats behind a few mainstream examples: Bike sharing is the fastest-growing form of transportation in the world, with over 500,000 trips being made in the first six weeks of operation for London's Barclays Cycle Hire."<sup>52</sup> Other notable successful collaborative consumption cases are:

- Zilok, a leader in the peer-to-peer market, has grown at a rate of around 25 percent since it was founded in October 2007.<sup>53</sup>

- Zopa, the first online peer-to-peer lending marketplace in the world, did more business in its fifth year at 35 million pound (March 2009 to



54. *Statistics on Couchsurfing* (2012)

55. Zhao (2010)

56. Botsman and Rogers (2010)

March 2010), than in the previous four years combined at 34.5 million pound. By October 2010, Zopa had lent over 100 million pound between each other (only within 5 years of operation.)

- Couchsurfing, a global free hospitality exchange service, is the currently most visited 'hospitality service' on the Internet.<sup>54</sup>

- By 2015, it is estimated that 4.4 million people in North America and 5.5 million in Europe will belong to services like the one from Zipcar, a car sharing service, whose membership alone more than tripled in 2009.<sup>55</sup>

- And it's not just the companies making money. As 'The Economist' noted, individuals involved in collaborative consumption are becoming 'micro-entrepreneurs.' For example, the average New Yorker participating in Airbnb is making \$1,600 a month, renters on Zilok are making over \$1,000 a year from renting out just one item such as a camera or a bike.<sup>56</sup>

From the phenomenon of sharing through social media like Youtube, Flickr, and Twitter, to Wikipedia, the world's largest encyclopedia being constantly written by the people of the world, to collaborative consumption, the explosion of this technology has led us to experience the concept of cooperation we long ago lost the feeling of. Inspired by activities on the online world, some people are starting to apply the same collaborative principles and sharing behavior to the physical areas of their lives. From morning commuting to work by car-sharing, borrowing textbooks from complete strangers, swapping used furniture with neighbors, to gardening in someone else's back yard, different areas of our lives once using the hyper-consumption model are now being done in a collaborative way. This is a revolution. This is the future of sustainable consumption.

*Terminology.* The term COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION was first coined by Marcus Felson and Joe L. Spaeth, in their paper Community Structure and Collaborative Consumption: A Routine Activity Approach, published in 1978 in American Behavioral Scientist. The paper dealt with car sharing. The concept has since been redefined to fit the contemporary context. Botsman and Rogers have described collaborative consumption as follows:

*"Collaborative Consumption describes the rapid explosion in traditional sharing, bartering, lending, trading, renting, gifting, and swapping reinvented through network technologies on a scale and in ways never possible before.*

*...Collaborative Consumption is disrupting outdated modes of business and reinventing not just what we consume but how we consume. New marketplaces... are enabling "peer-to-peer" to become the default way people exchange — whether it's unused space, goods, skills, money,*

*or services — and sites like these are appearing everyday, all over the world."*<sup>57</sup>

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid., p.71- 75

While the definition above explains very well what collaborative consumption is or can be, I find it too narrow. In order to make it more open, less time specific and fit the thesis purpose, I have come up with my own definition:

*Collaborative consumption is:*

*To consume (using resources);*

*Together (by sharing, lending-renting, trading, gifting, etc.);*

*Within a community (from local town to the global village);*

*Through network technologies (the internet, etc.)*

If all four elements exist, a certain service can be considered as collaborative consumption. From this definition, many services can be fit into the collaborative consumption model. Botsman and Rogers have divided the system into 3 categories:

1. *Product Service System (PSS.)* The basis of the product service model is the shift to a 'usage mind-set' whereby people pay for the benefit of the product—what it does for them—without needing to own the product outright.

In a PSS, a service enables multiple products owned by a company to be shared (car sharing, solar power, launderettes, etc.), or products that are privately owned to be shared or rented peer-to-peer (Zilok, TheHireHub, Erento.)

2. *Redistribution Markets.* Social networks enable used or pre-owned goods to be redistributed from where they are not needed to someone where they are. In some instances, the marketplace is based on entirely free exchange (Freecycle); in others the goods are sold for points (Barterquest) or for cash (eBay.) This category challenges the traditional relationship between producer, retailer and consumer, and disrupts the doctrines of 'buy more' and 'buy new.'

3. *Collaborative Lifestyle.* People with similar interests are banding together to share and exchange less tangible assets such as time, space, skills and money. They include shared models for working spaces (The Cube London), goods (Ecomodo), tasks, time and errands (Task Rabbits), gardens (Landshare), food (Lourish). Collaborative exchanges are not only happening on a local level, but worldwide, transcending physical boundaries in activities such as peer-to-peer social lending (Zopa) and travel (Couchsurfing, AirBNB).<sup>58</sup>

I have arrived at my own additional category, using ‘business model’ as a factor. For example, car-sharing services can be divided into different groups:

1. *B2C (Business to Peer) Model*. Business to Peer (B2C) Model. The B2C model means there exists a central corporation that supplies the shared product or service to the community. ZipCar is a membership-based car-sharing company providing automobile reservations to its members, billable by the hour or day. The company, with some capital investment, acquires, provides rental service and takes care of all the cars.

2. *P2P (Peer to Peer) Model*. The P2P model is much more capital efficient than their B2C counterpart because it does not require any capital investment to acquire assets. Instead, it relies on a community to supply them, typically in exchange for a revenue share of the transaction. P2P car sharing enables car owners to rent their own cars. GetAround, a San Francisco based company, operates a market place for P2P car sharing at a fraction of the cost of ZipCar. Car owners use the income from rentals to cover car payments and maintenance costs. The results? – fewer cars on the road that are used more often. Nearly everyone benefits.

3. *NFP (Not For Profit) Model*. A local organization or community that facilitates car sharing with the goal of changing driving habits rather than making a profit. Services in this category operate like the B2C model, except for much lower prices (or free) and most of the time owned by the city or government body.

#### EFFECTS

As mentioned a number of times, I believe the collaborative consumption model is healthier and more sustainable than the hyper consumption model. This section will show the positive effects this new model can have on humans, the environment and economies.

*Effects on Human*. Within the collaborative consumption model, people can still enjoy comfort, pleasure and luxury without the burden of extra working hours. When there are other cheaper alternatives, why become stressful and unhappy just to buy the next cool thing?

Especially in the PSS category, instead of having to acquire the actual products (e.g. physical movie DVDs) and all the costs involved in owning and maintaining them (time and cost spent going to a shop, storage space, etc.), people actually get what they want (to watch a movie) at a much lower cost (online streaming services – Netflix, or purchase for download movies like iTunes.) Even services change. Instead of living in a dry, standardized, isolated and expensive hotel, consumers now have a choice to enjoy much

more humane hospitality with the locals for a lower price via services like AirBNB, or even free with Couchsurfing.

Whether sharing, renting, trading, buying used goods or staying with locals, not only money will be saved but people can actually make a living out of these services. Going back to the original example, why let your power drill sit idly in your garage when you can earn some pocket money by lending it out.

A story from the Sydney Morning Herald shows how rental services can save people money without sacrificing the excitement of the latest fashion. Instead of paying the full price for the latest fashionable bag collection, ‘Bag Borrow or Steal’, an online bag rental service can let people get hold of the latest ‘Kelly’ handbag by Hermes for as little as 10% of the original price, with an option to buy. Mangier, the site owner, explains that while the renter may not enjoy the full benefits of ownership, “the consumer is still experiencing the core element behind a luxury brand – emotional.” Consumers seem to agree, as tens of thousands have already used the high-end service, and receive their bags via express courier.<sup>59</sup>

As our relationship with objects move from ownership to use, more time gets freed up, and options to satisfy our needs, whether for travel, leisure or family, change for the better. Green guru Joel Makower commented in a recent article, “Can you imagine when we reach a point where not owning a car becomes the ultimate luxury and its own kind of status symbol?”<sup>60</sup>

People from within the local neighborhood to somewhere across the world start to get more and more connected, communities strengthen and previously untapped and wasted resources – idling capacities – are utilized for greater purpose. In the same ways brands work in hyper consumption, people feel more connected once they start using the services and become a part of it, but instead of everything being about the ‘me’ (brands in hyper consumption), collaborative consumption brands are based on the ‘we’ relationships.

*Effects on Nature*. The collaborative consumption model is clearly better for the environment, as it does not require using as many new resources and generates less waste, if any. Here is how each collaborative consumption category contributes to more nature-friendly consumption.

In PSS, the idea is that people actually want something done regardless of the material of the object. We don’t actually need a car, what we need is to get from point A to point B. We don’t want a washing machine, we simply want

59. Got handbag envy? Rent one (2009)

60. Makower (2009)

our clothes cleaned. Redistribution Markets extend an object's life. By putting stuff we don't anymore need back into the market instead of the trash, one man's trash becomes another man's treasure. Both of these categories greatly reduce the need to produce more things, hence less use of natural resources, less pollution is produced and less waste is dumped.

Finally, the Collaborative Lifestyle helps reduce the energy consumption needed to keep centralized services running, thereby lowering harmful CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. A good example is a hotel service vs. local hospitality service like Airbnb. While there is no definitive research to compare this as yet, it is not hard to imagine that with the energy consumed to build a hotel, coupled with electricity usage each day to keep it running, sleeping in an extra bedroom of some local's houses would certainly be more energy efficient. Better yet, a guest meets the locals and can enjoy the culture from a local perspective.

*Effects on Economy.* In hyper consumption, corporations take control of what we consume, how often and at what price. The gigantic corporations may even have an influence on important government decisions that prove unfair for customers, harm the environment or block out potential new comers. While consumers are led to believe that they have the freedom of choice of products, the brand reality is that the market can often be dictated by a handful of powerful corporations (image 6.)

An online interactive chart designed by Josh On titled 'They Rule' provides a glimpse of some of the relationships of the US ruling class.<sup>61</sup> It takes as its focus the boards of some of the most powerful U.S. companies, which share many of the same directors. Some individuals sit on 5, 6 or 7 of the top 1000 companies. It allows users to browse through these interlocking directories and run searches on the boards and companies. One popular map is titled 'Bush Administration' (image 7.)

These charts show exactly how GDP can lie, because wealth is only distributed among these few 'rulers.'

So what might happen when collaborative consumption can potentially disrupt this? What happens when consumers start realizing that they are not going to feed fat corporations anymore, when there are other real choices from real individuals available, or even that they can share services, or get second-hand things for free?

Until recently, artists, designers or artisans wanting to create their own products would have to carry their projects around and ask government or



Image 6 (top) A chart showing how hundreds of convergence food brands are all controlled under ten large multi-national corporations. ([www.convergencealimentaire.info/](http://www.convergencealimentaire.info/))

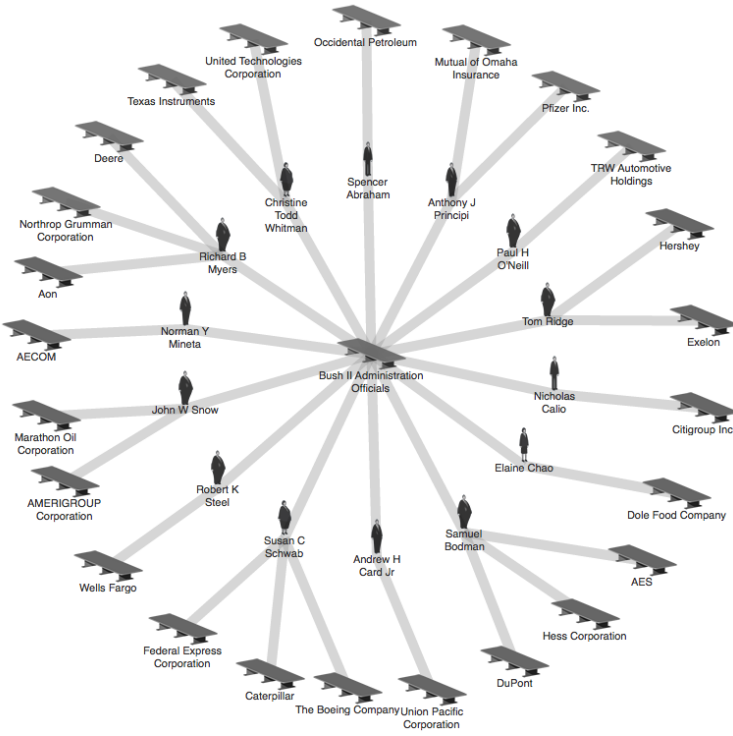


Image 7 (left) An online interactive art providing a glimpse of some of the relationships of the US ruling class—chairmans, board members and politicians. ([www.theyrule.net/](http://www.theyrule.net/))

financial institutions, who may well have little or no clue about creative values, for funding. Now they can also use crowd-funding services like Kickstarter or collective loan services like Zopa and start a project and production by themselves, funded by the people of the world who actually care.

Today we can watch free entertainment content from services like Youtube, many even funnier, more dramatic and better made than by the good-old media companies. What about those highly-polished, extravagant movies? In the spring of 2012, a Finnish movie, 'Iron Sky', achieved brilliant cinematic visual effects with a budget of just 8 million euros, more than ten percent of which came from supporters and donations via crowd-funding services around the world, who supported the movie because they wanted to watch it themselves. It began with just five Finns getting together with a computer and a camera.<sup>62</sup> They proved that, if they can do it, anyone can.

With collaborative consumption, I think we will be living in such a diverse economic climate. Certainly many products and services are and will still be much better produced within big, hierarchical corporations. But they will be like trucks: useful, still here, but very few around. Smaller producers will be like city cars: they will be everywhere, as we are already seeing the trends in start-ups. Individual citizens will be like bicycles: least powerful but most numerous. No one will just be merely a passenger anymore. The shift in power will be dramatic. Corporations will have less and less political power to influence, dominate and monopolize the market as they are so used to doing, and slowly power will be shifted, divided and distributed to smaller hands. In the end, markets can be healthier and more democratic through the collaborative consumption model.

#### MECHANISM

Just like hyper consumption, the collaborative consumption model has its own mechanisms to help attract users to keep using their services, and help expanding the communities. Three main mechanisms are SOCIAL PROOF, TRUST MODEL and SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

*Social Proof.* It is the first mechanism collaborative consumption has to rely on. Without it, any service can not kick-start, because to change the consumption habit requires seeing a fair amount of people doing something similar.

Sometimes it takes something visually obvious, like the BARCLAYS CYCLE HIRE users around the streets of London on distinct turquoise bikes.<sup>63</sup> Sometimes it is word of mouth, either from traditional or social media, like the new piece about exclusive bag rental or blog posts about clothes swapping.

This is at least in part due to our survival instincts. During 2007, Robert Cialdini, a psychology and marketing professor at Arizona State University, conducted a study on the role of social proof in motivating people to change their behavior. In several Phoenix hotels he compared the effects of the ubiquitous hotel bathroom placards that ask guests to reuse towels, testing four different encouraging messages for their effectiveness. The messages were:

- 'Do it for the environment'
- 'Help save resources for future generations'
- 'Partner with us to help save the environment'
- 'Join fellow guests in helping save the environment'

The first two messages had similar rates of success, around 30%.

The third, not surprisingly, had a lower success rate at 16%. The last message, however, was prominently successful, at 75%. The reason given was that it is social proof coming into play, giving the customers a peer influence message.<sup>64</sup> Social proof exists for a reason. It is a primitive instinct and a cognitive shortcut that allows us to make decisions based on copying the actions or behavior of others. "On some base level, it's survival recognition: these are the people who are most like me - we share the same circumstances"<sup>65</sup>, Cialdini says. Messages like 'everybody is doing it' instead of making someone feel guilty or appealing for responsibility is most likely to be more effective.

While in hyper consumption people are pressured by their peers to buy the newest, coolest or fastest, in collaborative consumption, social proof works more like peer information and support on a newer, better consumption alternative. And because there is no corporate agenda driving the services in collaborative consumption (because most of the people in the models are simply individuals like you and me), it can be deemed more trustworthy and genuinely beneficial for the people, not for the sake of corporate profits.

*Trust Models.* Most forms of collaborative consumption require a degree of trust among the users. For example, in care-sharing services, you would like the person sharing the car to be a safe, harmless and reliable person. On eBay, you would want to feel safe when purchasing a secondhand product listed as 'Almost New' to be almost new, not worn out. In Couchsurfing, letting strangers sleep in your place can sound dangerous and complicated without trusting that person beforehand.

But how can trust be established and built? In the hyper consumption model, middlemen have always functioned between two actors, the producers and consumer, where money works as the lubricant. When we go to a certain



shopping mall, the reputation and credibility of the place serves as a 'guarantee' that the goods/services purchased from there will perform as expected, at an acceptable price. Because there are rules set in place (like the goods sold have to be first-hand, with a returns policy, a guarantee, etc.), customers, by following the rules, feel that they can 'trust' them. These middlemen are the very reason why things are more expensive in shopping malls.

In the collaborative consumption model, there is no middleman in the peer-to-peer marketplace. Just as Rob Kalin recognized with Etsy, and the founders of Airbnb envisioned, the role of their companies is to act as curators and ambassadors, creating platforms that facilitate self-managed exchange and contributions. Instead of rules, reputation ranking and voting models are implemented. Positive ratings become the equivalent to a firsthand reference from someone you trust, like the middlemen, except that those who give the ratings are consumers like ourselves. It is not judged by a centralized corporation, but from the mass of people. Here are a few examples:

- In eBay, 'ratings' can be given out when a transaction is completed as negative, neutral or positive. The percentage of positives is then shown next to the username, indicating his trustworthiness. With enough ratings, users earn different kinds of star, indicating the amount of trades he/she has done. Below is a graphical explanation (image 8.)


- In Couchsurfing, users can give 'references' to travelers or hosts as negative, neutral or positive. The ratings are categorized indicating the ratio from traveling and hosting (image 9.)

- In Airbnb, 'reviews' can be given out to hosts as stars in different categories with optional explanatory text (image 10.)

Often, these collaborative consumption platforms are connected with social networks like Facebook, so that they can add 'friends' from there, increasing the credibility of the person. A person with high positive references in Couchsurfing, one who has hosted a lot of people, will be likely accepted with more hospitality and open arms than those without.

Trust is the new currency. People with higher 'trust scores' are likely to perform well and be respected in a particular community, thus gaining a better chance in future exchanges. We have returned to a time when if you do something wrong, embarrassing or without respect, the whole community will know. Free riders, vandals and abusers are easily spotted in the community, strengthening the trust between other users of the platforms.

Charles Leadbeter poses a provocative question in his book 'We-Think' - "What will happen when the networks created by the geeks combine with the traditions and habits of millions of people who were until recently



**pmctelecom** ( 842 ☆ )

**Positive Feedback (last 12 months): 100%**  
[How is Feedback Percentage calculated?]  
Member since: 26-Jun-06 in United Kingdom  
Registered as a Business Seller

This member is an **eBay Top-rated seller**

- Consistently receives highest buyer ratings
- Dispatches items quickly
- Has earned a track record of excellent service

[» Learn more](#)

	1 month	6 months	12 months
Positive	2	48	134
Neutral	0	1	1
Negative	0	0	0

Criteria	Average rating	Number of ratings
Item as described	★★★★★	112
Communication	★★★★★	111
Dispatch time	★★★★★	104
Postage and packaging charges	★★★★★	110

**References (5)**

5 Positive	0 Neutral	0 Negative
1 From Hosts	2 From Surfers	1 Traveling

**Image 8 (top)** Review system on Ebay.

**Image 9 (left)** Reference system on Couchsurfing.

**Image 10 (bottom)** Review system with comments on Airbnb.

Reviews (28)
Friends (0)

OVERALL GUEST SATISFACTION
★★★★★

ACCURACY	★★★★★	COMMUNICATION	★★★★★
CLEANLINESS	★★★★★	LOCATION	★★★★★
CHECK IN	★★★★★	VALUE	★★★★★


Dennis

Erstklassiger Fahrspaß!
November 2012


Alexander

Immer wieder ein geniales Fahrgefühl. Kontakt und Orga absolut unkompliziert und sehr nett. Michi ist ein Weltklasse-Vermieter

rural peasants?”<sup>66</sup> These new online and offline marketplaces are forming platforms where like-minded people can once again meet and barter from local to the global village with trust and confidence.

*Sense of Community.* So, what happens when everyone is more connected, consuming and producing together? A new kind of community is born. The best thing is that it is the kind of community where everyone can join effortlessly, regardless of their location, with few thresholds. Marketeers will call this kind of collective connection through some community as ‘branding’.

Services like Craigslist, Zipcar, Couchsurfing or Airbnb not only provide us with services to make our lives pleasant and comfortable; just like hyper consumption brands, they also satisfy the higher needs of ‘sense of belonging’ and ‘self esteem’ from Maslow’s famous hierarchy of needs pyramid. This is because instead of a ‘me’ based relationship, collaborative consumption gives people ‘we’ based relationships.

While hyper consumption brands stimulate us to want more and more things, collaborative consumption brands will make us want more sustainable and communal values. These values include relationships, trust currency, respect, support, happiness or social connections. Sometimes, people just like to spend time on these services without doing any actual transactions. They are simply ‘hanging out’ with the like-minded people. We become hooked on the brands like Gucci, Apple or Mercedes because these brands help us create personal self-esteem and identity. Now, people are in love with collaborative consumption brands for similar reasons but through interactions and community, not just through buying. People are actually ‘doing’ something to be part of one another’s lives. This shift is momentous, and we are now even seeing more hyper consumption brands trying to engage the people to collaborate, to do something together with their brand.

When people start to be engaged in these communities, they spread the word. They want to let their friends know about them and invite them to join in. Marketeers call them ‘brand evangelists’. This is done not because they are paid. It is done because they truly believe in these collaborative consumption brands. In ‘What’s Mine Is Yours’, a perfect example is given:

*“If you type in ‘Zopa’ on Youtube.com, you will encounter ‘Dyfedpotter’, the pseudonym of unassuming young man in a plain white T-shirt and chinos. He has made a home movie of himself extolling the merits of low-interest loans from this social lending network.”*<sup>67</sup>

In the next three minutes, we see Dyfedpotter explain the simplicity of how Zopa works using only a packet of Skittles and a laptop. What he has created is the most genuine, authentic piece of advertising no agency could match. This is the result of participating in collaborative consumption services. It is about people with enterprise, not business, gaining the benefits, a sense that we are all in this together. Erik Qualman, in his book *Socialnomics*, highlights why people such as Dyfedpotter are so important to brands - only 14 per cent of people trust advertisers, yet 78 per cent of consumers trust peer recommendations.<sup>68</sup>

Community is the brand and the brand is the community. On 17 May 2007, zipsters (ZipCar users) organized an event to celebrate Zipcar’s seventh birthday at City Hall Plaza in downtown Manhattan. Can you imagine a regular hyper consumption brand where people simply giving out money in exchange for products organize such a celebration? I hardly think so. With this vitality, collaborative consumption brands can only grow stronger and stronger.

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## CHAPTER CONCLUSION

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From cooperative to individualistic. From survival to leisure. From bartering to currency. The relationship between humans and consumption has evolved greatly over the course of history. I believe we are, once again, at another major crossroads. As hyper consumption becomes highly unsustainable, an alternative is needed, just like when bartering was replaced by currency because of impracticality. It is just a natural process.

From the evidence and arguments shown above, I believe such a concrete fact cannot be overstated or repeated enough, that the collaborative consumption model is a far healthier, more sustainable alternative to hyper consumption. It is this new model that should slowly replace the old.

To fellow individuals, especially designers, I encourage you to jump off the hyper consumption wagon and join the collaborative consumption revolution. It is now the time to change for a better future, before it is far too late.

Why am I making this plea? Because I believe that better design can contribute to the success of collaborative consumption. Ezino Manzini, professor of industrial design at Politecnico de Milano, and a thought leader on strategic design for sustainability, who is passionate about strategic design asked: how can designers make collaborative models so easy that they will be adopted instantly and intuitively? The role of the designer, Manzini says, is to reduce the threshold of effort so that regardless of the amount of willpower a given user may have, the model can achieve its purpose.

I believe that collaborative consumption is actually the way forward. The sooner we are able to realize this opportunity, the better we will find ourselves in a better starting position from the rest of the industry. To build such business is actually for the people and from the people. Brands will be connected with them, because 'you' are also 'us'.

This thesis is created precisely to help you do that kick-starting, guiding, setting up, and improving your collaborative consumption service through visual design.

# chapter two

## case studies analysis

Five existing collaborative consumption services are selected as case studies for analysis in this chapter. I made a survey of existing collaborative consumption services and selected these five cases as they can cover vast areas in the field, each with either different category or amount of users. The purpose of the analysis is:

- to anatomize each service's visual elements.
- to evaluate and justify design decisions behind those elements using specific academic frameworks or references.

The chapter is divided into 8 sections. 'Methodology' introduces the 6-point analysis framework and its background based on existing branding theory. 'Introduction' provides basic ideas of the five selected case studies.<sup>1</sup> The later six sections follow the each topic in the 6-point analysis method: Visual Identity, Usability, Association, Quality, Social Design and Emotion.

The aim of this chapter is to collect notable findings during the analysis to be later combined with lessons from *Chapter 3* in order to draw conclusions to my research question.

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### METHODOLOGY: 6-POINT ANALYSIS

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In order to reach the chapter's goal—to anatomize and evaluate each service's visual elements, a framework is required. I was looking for an appropriate framework to that covers various aspects within a collaborative consumption service, including visual identity, usability, user experience, information architecture and more.

Then I came across an approach to look at collaborative consumption service as a brand. As I found out that branding can cover all the mentioned aspects of any collaborative consumption services, I began to study more about its definition, history and any related frameworks that could be useful for the analysis.

In 'Strategic brand management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity', Kevin Keller explained that the term branding had been around for centuries as a mean to distinguish one producer from another. The original vocabulary from Old Norse, 'brandr' means 'to burn', as in the old times, live-stocks were stamped with irons to identify ownership. According to the AMA (American Marketing Association), a brand is a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identity the goods and services of one seller of group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition."<sup>2</sup> Keller concludes that, "the key to branding is that consumers

1. Please note that the elements used in this analysis are collected during August 2012. Some analysis information can be outdated as of now.

2. Marketing Power Dictionary (2012)



3. Keller (2003)

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

perceive differences among brands in a product category.”<sup>3</sup>

In order to understand what elements, or anatomies are needed to make up a brand, one must understand ‘brand equity.’ Brand equity is a phrase used in the marketing industry which describe the value of having a brand. Keller wrote:

*“Two questions often arise regarding brands: What makes a brand strong? and How do you build a strong brand? To help answer both of these questions, this section introduce the consumer-based brand equity model (CBBE)...*

*...Although a number of useful perspectives concerning brand equity, CBBE model provides a unique point of view as to what brand equity is and how it should best be built, measured and managed...*

*...The basic premise of the CBBE model is that the power of a brand lies in what customers have learned, felt, seen, and heard about the brand as a result of their experience over time. In other words, the power of a brand lies in what resides in the mind of consumers.”<sup>4</sup>*

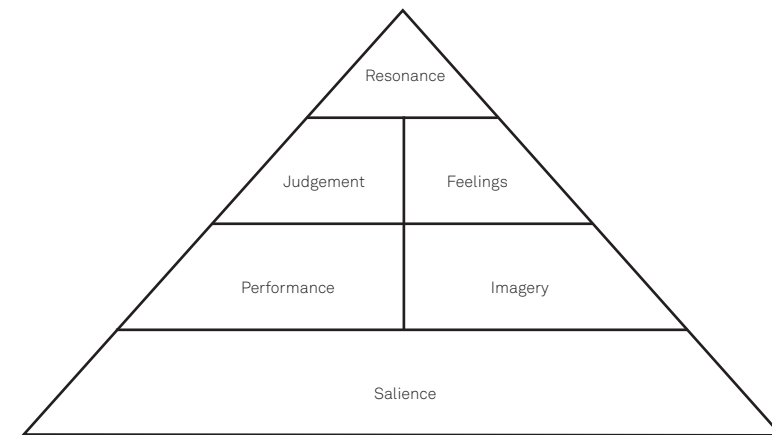
and

*“What causes brand equity to exist? How do marketers create brand equity? Consumers-based brand equity occurs when the consumers has a high level of awareness and familiarity with the brand and holds some strong, favorable, and unique brand associations in memory.”<sup>5</sup>*

This is especially true for Collaborative consumption services, as it is all about the people connected through a platform. The success of a collaborative consumption service relies heavily on the experience users have interacting with the platform. If early experiences are satisfying, users will likely return and use the services, invite their peers to join in, rising the number of users. Growing community is crucial for Collaborative consumption because as mentioned in *Chapter 1*. Inability to reach the critical mass of idling capacity might cause the service to fail before it even properly took off.

Keller proposed a ‘Brand Building Blocks’ model to help create a strong brand equity. He suggested a form of pyramid to explain the six most important components (image 1.)

If these blocks can determine a brand’s success, it is logical to analyze the case studies by using these six components as the framework. But since I am only focused on visual elements in the analysis, it makes more sense to rename the component’s name to fit the purposes of this thesis.



**Image 1** Keller's 'Brand Building Blocks'

#### 1. SALIENCE = VISUAL IDENTITY

Brand salience creates awareness of the brand. It helps people recognize, recall and understand what the brand is. The name ‘Coke’, the logo with curly calligraphy, the white curly stripe across red backgrounds, the knowledge of knowing a black sweet-carbonated drink – all these elements are example of brand salience.

This is where most of the visual design works are visible. Logo, graphical elements, typography, corporate colors or copywriting are all part of this.

#### 2. IMAGERY = ASSOCIATION

Brand imagery is how people think about the brand in an intangible, abstract way. It is in the mind of the consumers the to whom, when, where and how the brand associates with. Imagery is often associated with representations of humans, be it in photography, illustration or moving image format.

For example, if one talks about ‘Apple’, one may associate it with ‘young, vibrant and urban people across all age and gender. Customers use Apple product in well-designed environment, could be a hip coffee down-town. Customers carrying and using Apple product has an aura of being technologically knowledgeable, fashionable, and moderate luxurious feeling in them.’ Demographic and psychographic user profiles also fit into this category. For visual analysis, I examined the photographic images (both still and moving) elements to understand that kind of imagery each Collaborative consumption service wants to be associated with from the users.

#### 3. FEELINGS = USER EXPERIENCE

Brand feelings are consumers’ emotional responses and reactions towards a particular brand. It’s also related to social currency evoked by the brand–how

it affects consumer's feelings about themselves and their relationships with others. I continue using Apple as an example here. Customers may feel that Apple product is 'cool, cutting-edge, luxurious, user-friendly and reliable' and that the social currency of using Apple is 'medium-to-high class and approved and uplifted by the society.'

#### 4. PERFORMANCE = USABILITY

For consumers, the greatest expectation in using any particular products or services is that they should perform and satisfy the expectations, needs and wants they have. It is all about functionalities. For Collaborative consumption services to function properly, information architecture, user interface and HCI (Human-Computer Interaction) are all concerned.

#### 5. JUDGEMENT = QUALITY

Brand judgement deals with quality, credibility and superiority (compared to its competitors). Judgement for a certain brand can only be made when users have had enough experienced with the brand. Quality assessment goes through four elements: visual identity, associations, usability and social design using SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Risk) analysis method to conclude in overall what are already good and what can be improved upon.

#### 6. RESONANCE = SOCIAL DESIGN

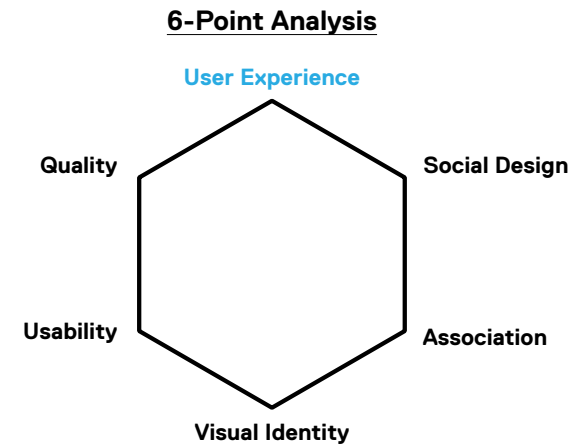
This is the final step where the pyramid is aimed at, which also holds true for Collaborative consumption services as communities are extremely vital in it being able to survive and become successful. Brand resonance refers to the ultimate relationships consumers have with the brand. Keller defined it as four keywords: Behavioral Loyalty, Attitudinal Attachment, Sense of Community and Active Engagement

Taking a look at all four of them it is obvious that Collaborative consumption can never exist without any of these, but I would also add Trust into that category as well. Visual design certainly can encourage users to interact with other users in desired manners, come back to use the service again, share their activities via social medias and ultimately build strong community inside the platform.

While the pyramid form is appropriate to understand the process of creating brand equity step by step (bottom to top), I think the overall shape of a hexagon is more appropriate for the analysis purpose. This is to give a better visual coherent by not over-emphasizing any particular component by different sizes (image 2.) This modified framework is referred as 6-POINT ANALYSIS in this thesis.

I set the 'user experience' point up top because it is one aspect that visual designers have no control over—how users ultimately feel about the brand depends on result of the overall experience they have from interacting with the other five components. Emotions can even be regarded as the brand's judgement. It does not matter how pretty it looks or well it performs, at the end of the day, "a brand is a person's *gut feeling* about a product, service, or organization"<sup>6</sup> said brand guru Marty Neumeier.

6. Neumeier (2005)



**Image 2** My approach to analyze the five case studies, adapted from Keller's model. I name it: 6-Point Analysis.

## INTRODUCTION: 5 CASE STUDIES

To establish basic understandings, it is a good idea to get to know each of the five case studies before the actual analysis. The introduction includes each service's vision, what it is that they do, how they do it, to whom are they for, and why does it matter. Most of the text was taken directly from each case's website as of August 2012. The five cases are chosen to cover as wide spectrum within collaborative consumption services as possible, including all categories (PSS, Redistribution Market and Lifestyle.) Three of them being established and well-known and two are relatively new and still growing services. I also tried to pick services with differences in visual styles.



NAME: Couchsurfing

SLOGAN: Participate in Creating a Better World, One Couch At A Time

URL: [www.couchsurfing.org](http://www.couchsurfing.org)

#### VISION:

At Couchsurfing, we envision a world where everyone can explore and create meaningful connections with the people and places they encounter. Building meaningful connections across cultures enables us to respond to differences with curiosity, appreciation and respect. The appreciation of diversity spreads tolerance and creates a global community.<sup>7</sup>

#### WHAT DOES IT DO:

Couchsurfing offers hospitality exchange and social networking services. The concept of hospitality exchange refers to centrally organized social networks of individuals, generally traveller, who offer or seek accommodation without monetary exchange.

Here are the main functionality the service offers:

1. Search and stay with the locals wherever members wish to travel.
2. Host members from around the world.
3. Participate in activities hosted by its members.
4. Get advice and ideas when planning a trip via site forums.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK:

First, register and create a profile. Add a few photos and descriptive information about your interests, hobbies, and personality. This will help people see that you're an awesome person to host, surf with or join in fun activities.

Once you've created a profile, you can browse our network (online or on your phone) of millions of people around the globe looking for a host in your city, surf (staying) with hosts almost anywhere in the world that you're travelling to, or join fellow CouchSurfers in thousands of local activities like picnics, hikes, dance parties, language exchanges and much more.

Trust is the foundation of sharing and of CouchSurfing. Helping you stay safe is our top priority. Over the years, our safety team has built a system that fosters trust among our members and helps CouchSurfers make informed decisions and stay safe.

A cornerstone of our trust system is the public references that members leave for one another following any kind of in-person meeting. They rate their experiences as positive, negative or neutral. Besides the rating, we encourage our members to leave very detailed references of each other so that others can be fully informed before agreeing to host, surf or just meet.

We also offer an optional verification system that confirms individuals' names and addresses. Those who opt in are identified with a check mark icon and are featured higher up in CouchSurfing search results.

Another safety feature we offer is vouching, which is a way for members to publicly declare trust in each other.

Ultimately, taking the time to read member profiles very carefully to make sure they've been vetted and that there's a personality match is critical to safety and a positive experience.<sup>8</sup>

#### FOR WHOM:

Couchsurfing is open to everyone who wishes to be connected with travellers around the world. So far, there are over 4.8 millions in over 207 countries, across all age and gender. The average age of the users is 28.<sup>9</sup>

#### WHY IT MATTERS:

Couchsurfing is arguably the biggest and most important hospitality exchange on the planet, with its largest membership database, and currently ranked number one in 'hospitality service' search term in the internet.<sup>10</sup> Mark Granovetter, a sociologist at Stanford University, writes that the social relationships of people whom we don't know can greatly increase individual's prospects and well-beings.<sup>11</sup> It is estimated that more than 111,186 close friendships have been created through Couchsurfing and around 18 percent of visits are reciprocated directly.<sup>12</sup>

It has dramatically changed the perception of trusts between strangers in the world, with the impressive 99.794 percent positive experience feedbacks received between hosts, surfers and travellers.<sup>13</sup>

8. Couchsurfing—FAQ (2012)

9. Statistics on Couchsurfing (2012)

10. Ibid.

11. Granovetter (1973)

12. Leuterbach et al. (2000)

13. Botsman and Rogers (2010)

**CouchSurfing** Get the Mobile App

Sarun Pinyarat, Tommi Mustaniemi and 26 other friends use CouchSurfing. Login Language: English

**CouchSurfing helps you meet and adventure with new friends around the world.**

**Sign Up with Facebook!**  
We will never post anything without your permission.

or

First Name  
Last Name  
Email  
Confirm Email  
Password  
I am **Select Sex**  
Birthday **January 1 1984**  
City

By clicking "Sign Up", I agree to the [Terms of Use](#).

**Sign Up**

Like Us on Facebook Follow Us on Twitter Read Our Blog

**TIME** Couch surfing isn't just a means of accommodation; it is an art.

**Forbes** Some 5.6 million connections have taken place on the site.

**The New York Times** As is surprisingly often the case with CouchSurfing, I loaded not only my

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC** The next big wave of innovation transforming how we travel is in social

**THE NEW YORKER** I joined to save money. But now I'd happily pay to meet these people and have

**npr** I stayed with a fantastic guy who walked me around the city and told me about

**CouchSurfing** William Surf Host Activities Groups

**Your Profile**

Hi, William! Welcome back!

**Things to do:**

- Get verified
- Fill out your profile
- Post your travel plans

**Can you host?**

Maybe







**Your Network**

CouchSurfing friends are people that you know and trust. A strong network will help you connect to the community and meet more people.

**Find more friends**

**Search** Current location for Members, Activities, Groups Go

**Surfers looking for a host near Stockholm** Show more surfers

 rehan.chaudry 33 / male Sweden	 arman.orman 26 / male Turkey	 filip.stachura 22 / male Poland	 alessandro.bassi 23 / male Italy	 jesterjames 24 / male Poland	 corinne.charlton 25 / female Germany
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**Nearby Activities** Show all activities

**Open Knowledge Festival 2012**  
We are delighted to host the world's first Open Knowledge Festival: a week of participatory sessions, keynote lectures, workshops, hackathons and satellite events in Helsinki, ... (more)

Started In the Past  
Ends in 24 hours  
Attendees: 85  
Hämeentie 135, Helsinki, Suomi

**CS Weekly Meetings Summer Edition - Picnic in the park**  
Summer picnics - Every Thursday

In 9 hours  
Attendees: 162  
Helsinki, Finland

**Surf**

**Search for hosts in your destination and browse for interesting profiles.**  
We recommend sending thoughtful CouchRequests to at least 5 hosts per location.

**Tips for Successful Surfing**

**Where are you going?**  
**Copenhagen, Capital Region of Denmark, Denmark**

Everywhere Current Location Browse Locations

**CouchSurfing** Sarun Surf Host Activities Groups

**Mik Eriksson**  
Current Mission: Sail to Marquesas, Polynesia

**Personal Designations**  
Denmark  
Capital Region of Denmark  
Copenhagen

**Community Designations**  
Show nearby Couches

**General Information** Report


Mik Eriksson has been vouched for  
VERIFIED MEMBER Identity Checked, Location Verified (3) more info

Couch available Yes  
CouchSurf requests replied to 62%  
last login 3 days ago  
Papeete, Îles du Vent, French Polynesia ...

member since December 14th, 2009  
profile views 1,524  
age 46  
gender Male  
membername MIKERIKSSON  
occupation SAILING. Formerly artist, layouter, writer, editor, teacher, project manager. Now as little as possible  
education Private pilot license  
grew up in Copenhagen

**Send CouchRequest to Mik Eriksson!**

Send Message ++ Contact List Print



The couch is SAILING :). Write to arap a t mailasail d o t com



# KICKSTARTER

NAME: Kickstarter

URL: [www.kickstarter.com](http://www.kickstarter.com)

## VISION:

Kickstarter is a new way to fund creative projects. We believe that:

a good idea, communicated well, can spread fast and wide.

a large group of people can be a tremendous source of money and encouragement.<sup>14</sup>

## WHAT DOES IT DO:

Kickstarter is a crowd funding project for creative projects. Crowd funding describes the collective effort of individuals who network and pool their resources to support efforts initiated by other people or organizations.

## HOW DOES IT WORK:

Kickstarter facilitates gathering monetary resources from the general public, a model which circumvents many traditional avenues of investment. Projects must meet Kickstarter's guidelines to launch. Project creators choose a deadline and a goal minimum of funds to raise. They utilize all-or-nothing funding, as explained on the website:

Every Kickstarter project must be fully funded before its time expires or no money changes hands. Why?

1. It's less risk for everyone. If you need \$5,000, it's tough having \$2,000 and a bunch of people expecting you to complete a \$5,000 project.

2. It allows people to test concepts (or conditionally sell stuff) without risk. If you don't receive the support you want, you're not compelled to follow through. This is huge!

3. It motivates. If people want to see a project come to life, they're going to spread the word.

Money pledged by donors is collected using Amazon Payments. The platform is open to backers from anywhere in the world and to creators who are permanent US residents of 18 years of age or older, with a US address, US bank account, a US state-issued driver's license, and a major US credit or debit card. Kickstarter takes 5% of the funds raised, while Amazon charges an additional 3-5%.<sup>15</sup>

## FOR WHOM:

For fundraisers, Kickstarters only accept 'creative' projects so far, including 13 categories and 36 subcategories. They are: Art, Comics, Dance, Design, Fashion, Film and Video, Food, Games, Music, Photography, Publishing, Technology and Theater.

For backers (donators), it can be anyone who feels interested and attached to the project. Why do people support projects?

1. Project creators inspire people to open their wallets by offering smart, fun, and tangible rewards (products, benefits, and experiences).

2. Kickstarter projects are efforts by real people to do something they love, something fun, or at least something of note. These stories unfold through blog posts, pics, and videos as people bring their ideas to life. Take a peek around the site and see what we're talking about. Stories abound.<sup>16</sup>

## WHY IT MATTERS:

Kickstarter is the most well-known and the most influential crowd-funding service. Without it, the term could have never popularized and many services could have never emerged followed suit (including the service I was commissioned, *Cake Theory*). It has sprung itself to become the new playground for artists, designers and innovators to test the feasibility of their ideas, sketches or prototypes, whether there are enough interested people out there to enjoy their products, services or experience offered. "It felt great because it was like getting validation for a project at the beginning instead of the end,"<sup>17</sup> Tim Chafer, the founder of the game studio – Double Fine, told BBC when the news came that their project was successfully funded via Kickstarter.

It has also become a new way to earn funding without having to go through regulations and formalities, meaning wasting time at a much higher interest rate. Kickstarter is also risk-free.

So far, there are more than 28,000 successful projects, with more than 338 millions U.S. dollars raised. 43.96% is the successful rate of the project as of 2012.<sup>18</sup>

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# Fund & Follow Creativity

Kickstarter is a funding platform for creative projects. [Learn more!](#)

FEATURED IN

## Staff Picks: Games

[See all 212 Games projects](#)

**The New Science**  
by Conquistador Games in Columbus, OH

Newton, Galileo and other great minds from the Scientific Revolution race toward discoveries in this unique worker placement game.

97% **\$14,555** 22

- Art
- Comics
- Dance
- Design
- Fashion
- Film & Video
- Food
- Games**
- Music
- Photography
- Publishing
- Technology

?! What is Kickstarter? We're the world's largest funding platform for creative projects. [Learn more!](#)

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- [Why is funding all-or-nothing?](#)
- [How can I find interesting projects to back?](#)

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- [How do I start a project?](#)
- [Can Kickstarter be used to fund anything?](#)
- [What information should I share on my project page?](#)

[→ See all](#)

### BACKER QUESTIONS

- [When is my card charged?](#)
- [What do I do if I have questions about a project?](#)
- [How will project creators get my info to deliver rewards?](#)

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# Pixel Sand

by Super Game Programmer 3

[Home](#)
[Updates 11](#)
[Backers 1,006](#)
[Comments 208](#)

Kirkland, WA
 Video Games

**Funded!** This project successfully raised its funding goal on February 19, 2012.

**1,006** backers

**\$13,617** pledged of \$9,000 goal

**0** seconds to go

Project by **Super Game Programmer 3**  
Kirkland, WA  
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## Discover Projects

Passion, ideas, and ambition abound. Start exploring!

### Staff Picks

**The Taxidermist**  
by Thomas Love

An amateur taxidermist is haunted by the animals he has stuffed, while trying to overcome his past.

Savannah, GA

3% FUNDED \$150 23 DAYS TO GO

**Amazing Pulp Adventures Role Playing Game**  
by Timothy Glenn Bane, Scaldcrow

A 1940's retro-futuristic diesel-punk game of golden age heroes and villains with a twist of pulp action and adventure.

Greensboro, NC

1% FUNDED \$100.00 45 DAYS TO GO

**The Rascals "Once Upon A Dream" Reunion Shows**  
by Steven Van Zandt

The Rascals are back! You will determine how big these unique reunion shows will be, and you can even be a part of the show

Port Chester, NY

10% FUNDED \$10,425 29 DAYS TO GO

[→ See more staff picks](#)

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53

# SKILLSHARE

NAME: Skillshare

SLOGAN: Learn by Doing. Learn by Teaching. Learn by Collaborating.

URL: [www.skillshare.com](http://www.skillshare.com)

## VISION:

Our vision is to democratize learning by empowering teaching. To build a world where you can learn anything from anyone. Powered by an endless cycle of learning and sharing passions. We will turn every community into a campus. Every address into a classroom. And every inhabitant into a student and teacher. Skillshare is for the doers, not the academics or the theorists.

We are building the new world of education. From now on, there will be no passion left undiscovered, no personal potential left unfulfilled and no skill left unshared. In short, we're here to change the world by increasing the global passion index.

The future belongs to the curious. The ones who are not afraid to try it, explore it, poke at it, question it and turn it inside out.<sup>19</sup>

## WHAT DOES IT DO:

Skillshare is a marketplace to take and teach classes. Skillshare is powered by a community of teachers and students driven by a passion to share real-world skills through collaborative learning.

## HOW DOES IT WORK:

Skillshare began as a way for communities to share local knowledge by teaching and taking classes on everything from programming to entrepreneurship to cooking.

Students can enroll in two types of classes on Skillshare:

### 1. Local Classes

These classes meet in person, where students in the same community come together to learn skills in a single or multi-session class ranging from entrepreneurship to cooking.

### 2. Hybrid Classes

These classes combine project-based, online learning with in-person workshops, allowing students to collaborate and learn with others around the globe.

Classes on Skillshare range in price, which is set by the teacher, but tend to cost around \$30 per class. In general, Skillshare classes are orders of magnitude cheaper than their traditional equivalents at big universities and education centers.

Skillshare charges a 15% fee on all tickets sold. This only affects teachers; for students, the price you see is the price you pay.<sup>20</sup>

## FOR WHOM:

Skillshare is aimed at amateur teachers and learners, regardless of age and gender. They believe that everyone can be a teacher, believing that we all have a knowledge to share. There are five main skill sets (categories of classes) available: Creative Arts, Culinary Arts, Entrepreneurship, Lifestyle, and Technology. These are mainly short classes with very wide range from beer tasting, photography, programming and making baby food from scratch.

## WHY IT MATTERS:

Being funded with 3.1 millions U.S. dollars in 2011, on top of 550,000 U.S. dollars previously raised from Founder Collective and SV Angel, Skillshare is one most the most exciting Collaborative consumption services around. With already thousands of teachers and more than 15,000 hours of classes being taught, Skillshare has tapped into the idling capacity within human resources, because sometimes we just have little things we want to learn or teach, but can not afford to go to school or become a real professional. Above all, Skillshare has the potential to revolutionize education system for the better by 'democratize learning by empowering teaching.'





21. Tweney (2007)

22. *Craigslist–Factsheet* (2012)

23. Ibid.

# craigslist

NAME: Craigslist

URL: [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)

## VISION:

According to an interview with Craig Newmark, Craigslist founder, for Wired magazine:

“When I started it, all I thought I was giving a little bit back to the community. Other people were doing a lot more. And I had no idea that this would become a thing of some small significance. It was just a little hobby and the only difference between a little hobby and what we have now is that we follow through...

...I had nothing in mind more than telling people about arts and technology events in San Francisco. Pretty much everything on the site is based on user feedback. Frankly, I have no vision whatsoever... Somehow we’ve worked with people in the community to build an online community. We’re not certain how it happened, except that we really do listen to people. We try to treat people like we want to be treated, and somehow we built a culture of trust.”<sup>21</sup>

And from the website:

Q: Why does craigslist still use a “.org” domain?

A: It symbolizes the relatively non-commercial nature, public service mission, and non-corporate culture of craigslist.<sup>22</sup>

## WHAT DOES IT DO:

Craigslist is local classifieds and forums - community moderated, and largely free. Users can find jobs, housing, goods, services, romance, local activities, advice – just about anything.<sup>23</sup>

## HOW DOES IT WORK:

Craigslist is arguably one of the most simple Collaborative consumption services found. It is text-based website with very simple navigations.

To view ‘listing’ (ad posts), registration is not needed. The site has a range of broad categories, and each category has several subcategories, making it easy to navigate to the appropriate section quickly. For example, the ‘for sale’ category features subcategories like computer, books, electronics,

sporting, motorcycles and collectibles, among others.

Most ads include the member’s e-mail address. Craigslist offers a function that masks e-mail so that members don’t have to worry about their address being openly available. All transactions are between the person who posted the ad and the person responding to it. Craigslist’s employees don’t get involved in any transactions or discussions unless a problem is reported.

If user wants to participate in forum discussions or post own classified, a Craigslist account is needed, which can be easily created only with a valid e-mail.

Craigslist users act like the site’s watchdogs by monitoring the content that gets posted. Users flag posts to draw attention to those that are particularly interesting and those that detract from the site. The tags that can be applied to posts are best of Craigslist (a funny or effective post), miscategorization<sup>24</sup>, spam/over-post<sup>25</sup> and prohibited.<sup>26</sup>

## FOR WHOM:

Craigslist is for everyone. The range of listings is so wide and general it covers almost all products and services possible for transactions. Craigslist, however, heavily promote all transactions to be done locally to avoid frauds and scams.

## WHY IT MATTERS:

Craigslist is an internet phenomenon in many ways. With its very low barrier to enter and almost no learning curve, Craigslist has become one of the most popular website in the world. The site has over 50 billion page views per month, putting it in 42<sup>th</sup> place overall among web sites worldwide and 7th place overall among web sites in the United States, equivalent to about 19 visits per second.<sup>27</sup> With over 80 million new classified advertisements each month, Craigslist is the leading classifieds service in any mediums. The site receives over 2 million new job listings each month, making it one of the top job boards in the world.<sup>28</sup> It is also regarded as one of the biggest virtual community related to actual locality with 700 local sites in 70 countries, mostly running in their own language.<sup>29</sup> It also has established a place in popular culture with one documentary, one movies, several songs and many TV series references paying tribute to the community.

24. a post placed in the wrong section of the site

25. a generic post or one that has been posted multiple times

26. a post that directly violates the site's terms of use

27. *Statistics on Craigslist* (2012)

28. Lenhart et al. (2005)

29. *Craigslist–Factsheet* (2012)

craigslist

post to classifieds  
my account

search craigslist

for sale

event calendar

S M T W T F S

16 17 18 19 20 21 22

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

30 1 2 3 4 5 6

7 8 9 10 11 12 13

help, faq, abuse, legal  
avoid scams & fraud  
personal safety tips  
terms of use  
system status

about craigslist  
craigslist is hiring  
craigslist blog  
best-of-craigslist  
craigslist TV

SF bay area

sfcsbybenbyscz

community

activitieslost+foundartistsmusicianschildcarelocal newsgeneralpoliticsgroupsridesharepetsvolunteerseventsclasses

personals

strictly platonicwomen seek womenwomen seeking menmen seeking womenmen seeking womenmisc romancecasual encountersmissed connectionsrants and raves

discussion forums

1099giftspetsapplehaikuphilosartshealthpoliticatheisthelppsychautoshistoryqueer beautyhousingrecover bikesjobsreligion celebsjokesrofo compkinksciencecraftsl.t.r.shop

housing

apts / housingrooms / sharedsublets / temporaryhousing wantedhousing swapvacation rentalsparking / storageoffice / commercialreal estate for sale

for sale

appliancesarts+craftsantiquesauto partsbarterbaby+kidsbikesbeauty+hlthboatscars+trucksbooksodsdvd/vhsbusinesscell phonescomputerfreecollectiblesfurnitureelectronicsgeneralfarm+gardenjewelrygarage salematerials householdrvsmotorcyclesportingticketsmusic instrphoto+videotools toys+gameswantedvideo gaming

jobs

accounting+financeadmin / officearch / engineeringart / media / designbiotech / sciencebusiness / mgmtcustomer serviceeducationfood / bev / hospgeneral laborgovernmenthuman resourcesinternet engineerslegal / paralegalmanufacturingmarketing / pr / admedical / healthnonprofit sectorreal estate retail / wholesalesales / biz devsalon / spa / fitnesssecurityskilled trade / craftsoftware / qa / dbasystems / networktechnical supporttransporttv / film / videoweb / info design

nearby cl

bakersfieldchicofresnogold countryhanfordhumboldtinland empireklamath falls las vegaslos angelesmedfordmendocino comercedmodestomontereyorange coreddingrenoroseburgsacramentosan luis obispo santa barbarasanta mariasf bay areasiskiyou co stocktonsusantvilleventuravisalia-tulareyuba-sutter

us citiesus states

CL > SF bay area craigslist > city of san francisco > for sale / wanted > cell phones - by owner

all SF bay areasan franciscosouth bayeast baypeninsula north bay santa cruz

cell phones: by-owner | by-dealer | both

search for: iPhone 4s in: cell phones – by owner

price: min max [+]

all neighborhoods selected

has image

title onlyentire post

show images sort by most recent best match low price high price

Found: 277 Displaying: 1 - 100

Sep 21 - APPLE iPhone 4 32gb with APPLECARE WARRANTY UNLOCKED - \$350 (San Francisco) pic

Sep 20 - Mint condition unlocked black iPhone 4S 16GB - \$400 (SOMA / south beach) pic

Sep 20 - Verizon White iPhone 4S 32G looking to swap for BLACK ONE!! - (ingleside / SFSU / CCSF) pic

Sep 20 - Apple iPhone 4S 64GB Black - \$235 (We accept paypal...) pic

Sep 20 - fs.iPhone.4s.32GB.Black - \$200 (We accept paypal...) pic

Sep 20 - iphone.4s.16.gig.white - \$220 (We accept paypal...) pic

Sep 20 - White iPhone 4S 64GB With Apple Care - \$240 (We accept paypal...) pic

SF bay area craigslist > san francisco > for sale / wanted > cell phones - by owner

Avoid scams and fraud by dealing locally! Beware any deal involving Western Union, Moneygram, wire transfer, cashier check, money order, shipping, escrow, or any promise of transaction protection/certification/guarantee

### Mint condition unlocked black iPhone 4S 16GB - \$400 (SOMA / south beach)

Date: 2012-09-20, 11:59PM PDT

Reply to this post x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org

I'm selling my iPhone 4S. It is jailbroken and unlocked, so it will work on any GSM carrier. In the US, it will work on AT&T, T-Mobile, MetroPCS etc.

The phone is in great condition. Only very minor surface scratches that aren't noticeable. It comes with the original box and cables (headphones have never even been unwrapped).

Price is firm, cash-only, and in-person.



CL > craigslist > discussion forums > vegetarian forum

24h

compose new thread

check for replies

search vegetarian forum

[ 09/21/2012 04:08 ]

chi Married VEG couple on North Side < Chill\_Chi > 09/19 20:00

sea Vege Burgers at Red Robin Alasakan Way < shaderator > 09/18 08:02

lax detoxing healthy advice < 1-0o > 09/17 05:15

pit Healthy Changes Weight Loss < diannejean > 09/16 05:27

sfo New PotatoFo < Kanye\_West > 09/15 19:18

cle New Vegetarian Business In Ohio < veghead123 > 09/13 11:48

potato state! We now have a PotatoFo < Kanye\_West > 09/15 19:16

dem Proper nutrition < healthyp > 09/12 17:52

unk Vegetarian < VeganCurious > 09/08 19:44

Yes...don't eat meat. < Captain\_Waffles > 09/10 13:13

Cold turkey is meat better try other method. < byslexic-Dog > 09/10 15:55

Think about what you are eating < sozin > 09/15 06:03

McBonnelly < 09/04 16:10

He became vegetarian 3 years ago < LoveMyPitbulls > 09/05 09:08

orc I'm looking for some recommendations for < Hello-Kitty > 09/20 08:51

I would recommend "Quick vegetarian dishes" < blackcat99 > 09/02 06:02

Amazon I think is selling the new ones for \$47 < blackcat99 > 09/02 06:08

Animal Rescue Benefit - Wine Tasting < BFAAS > 09/23 15:16

mfr Who's ready to par-tay < Ambergries > 09/19 23:57

phx Prostate Cancer < Baseball\_Freak > 09/06 08:15

Here's info with references < qveggie4life > 09/14 21:14

it doesn't matter what type of cancer it is < blissedsadge > 09/28 18:42

idea please < heathabelle > 09/06 03:38

I love hummus. < 40lbs2go-again > 09/15 20:39

Hummus, tapanade < FestiveDogShit > 09/16 11:59

dip/salads < painfool > 09/09 18:58

lax Venice Beach, CA-Free Veg Party Sunday August 5 < blackcat99 > 09/03 08:01

Bad news for vegetarians < Magnus\_Maximus > 07/31 14:10

All the more reason to be vegan/vegetarian < qveggie4life > 07/31 14:20

Anailed it < Pantheist\_1 > 08/04 20:58

Fantastic! But I can't hear it, however. < FestiveDogShit > 09/16 12:00

so what do YOU eat? < babygoldfish > 09/02 11:57

nyc Where can single vegetarin men meet single < curlybear1967 > 07/28 16:06

join a veg group meetup.com < LoveMyPitbulls > 07/20 04:36

Here's the full link if you are in NYC. < JoviCruz > 09/01 12:03

there is also a < MyThreeCents > 09/02 11:50

natural grocer < roman1983 > 09/05 14:02

pen pals? < painfool > 09/09 19:01

On the Road to Vegetarian??? < SweetC87 > 07/23 10:39

Vegetarian isn't necc. going to induce weight lo < manx2004 > 07/25 09:43

Whatever the reason < bleisse > 07/28 10:24

weight loss < painfool > 09/09 19:14

here: < radio\_waves > 07/25 15:21

The Kind Diet: a great book! < valenlinethegreat > 07/29 05:30

I think you should watch < littleDoveNPriest > 07/26 17:30



NAME: Autolib'

SLOGAN: An urban revolution.

URL: [www.autolib.eu](http://www.autolib.eu)

#### VISION:

Autolib' is the first public service plan with electric vehicles to be developed in a large European metropolis. An innovation in urban travel that will transform our experience of cities.

Our lifestyle is evolving. And transport is too. Autolib' is a key player in innovation with its self-service electric cars. This world first will revolutionize your journeys. What will be the effects of this revolution? The city will seem more open and travel more fluid and serene with these clean and silent cars moving through the streets.<sup>30</sup>

#### WHAT IT DOES:

Autolib' is an electric car sharing service in Paris. Car sharing is a model of car rental where people rent cars for short periods of time, often by the hour.

Car sharing is different from car rental in these perspectives:

- Car sharing is not limited by office hours
- Reservation, pickup, and return is all self-service
- Vehicles can be rented by minute, by hour, as well as by day
- Users are members and have been pre-approved to drive (background driving checks have been performed and a payment mechanism has been established)
- Vehicle locations are distributed throughout the service area, and often located for access by public transport.
- Insurance and fuel costs are included in the rates.

#### HOW DOES IT WORK:

With Autolib' you can rent a Bluecar whenever you wish and drive it in the of the Île-de-France region. Simple and ecological. Here are the steps:

##### 1. Online subscription

If you are interested in an Autolib' 1 Year Premium, Autolib' 1 Month or a 16h shared Autolib' Premium offer, you can apply online using our website. Click here (for registration) ,choose your offer and begin your

subscription. Autolib' one week and Autolib' one day offers are only available in our subscription kiosks.

##### 2. Rent

Equipped with your validated RFID badge, you can rent a car at the rental station of your choice. Pass your RFID badge over the sensor in order to unlock the Bluecar. An LED will show green if the operation is successful and red if it is not. This procedure will interrupt the link to the recharge station where the car is connected.

Unplug the cable and ensure it recoils correctly before closing the lid on the recharge unit. If you do not carry out this stage correctly, a message will appear on the touch screen inside the cabin of your Bluecar.

##### 3. Drive

Climb into your Bluecar and engage the contact key. Check the battery range and check the condition of the car. If there are any problems, declare them to the call centre via the rental kiosk before driving away.

##### 4. Share

And how do you return the Bluecar? Select an Autolib' station. Park the car and use your badge to clock in on the recharge unit. All that's left is to uncoil the cable and plug in the Bluecar. The rental ends when it is connected correctly and the lid of the recharge unit is closed. The doors of the Bluecar must be locked. It is no longer possible to start the car. However, you can open the car again to retrieve personal effects, should you need to.<sup>31</sup>


#### FOR WHOM:

The Autolib' Bluecar is available to anyone aged 18 or older with a valid French driving license who takes out a paid subscription. As of now, there are 3,000 cars serving in Paris and 45 surrounding communities (Île-de-France).

#### WHY IT MATTERS:

Despite only beginning their service in December 2011, the reception was overwhelming with more than 6,000 Parisians subscribing for the service with only 250 cars available at that time.<sup>32</sup> If proven successful, the electric car sharing scheme could enjoy the same success as its predecessor Zipcar had in the U.S. and the U.K.

6-Point Analysis



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# Autolib'


## JOIN US

& be one of the first to enjoy Autolib' !

[Register >](#)





For all informations :



**0800 94 2000**


+ numéro vert

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& be one of the first to enjoy Autolib' !



### • Corporate Offers

Select your offer >




### • How does it work ?

01 REGISTER

02 RENT

03 DRIVE

04 SHARE



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> Home > How it works? > A step-by-step manual > How it works

## How it works?

A STEP-BY-STEP MANUAL

The BLUECAR





HOW IT WORKS | video-tutorielle


### • Autolib', How it works?

Going shopping? Meeting a friend? Meeting a client? Paris life provides many situations where a temporary vehicle could be of use to you. A dream that has now become reality. Its name: Autolib'.

How to use Autolib'? Follow the guide!

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> Home > Register > Rates

## Register



Subscribe

Corporate Offers

**RATES**



STAY CONNECTED:







### • Our Rates

Autolib' changes your mobility habits. An alternative mean of transportation whose offers freedom to all your needs and desires. How can you get this revolutionary service?

Simple as Autolib'. Through a streamlined process, either online or a subscription kiosk,

STAY CONNECTED:



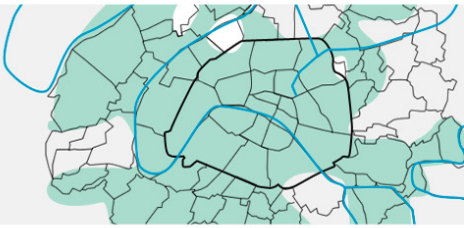
[WELCOME WILLIAM](#) | [FR](#) | [EN](#)

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> Home > The stations > Stations Map

## The stations

STATIONS MAP





### • All stations

Nearest stations:

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STAY CONNECTED:

32. Yoney (2012)

33. Wheeler (2009)

Brand visual identity, or just ‘visual identity’ is by far one of the most important element in creating a strong brand. It is very likely that visual identity will be among the first elements users encounter with any brands. Alina Wheeler said in her book ‘Designing Brand Identity’, that while brands speak to the heart, it is the visual identity that is tangible and appeal to the senses. It is the brand’s visual and verbal expression. “It is the shortest, fastest, most ubiquitous form of communication available. You can see it, touch it, hold it, hear it, watch it move.”<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, visual identity can build relationships between the brand and the users, as David Airey, author of ‘Logo Design Love: A Guide to Creating Iconic Brand Identities’ put it:

*“We often do judge books by their covers, whether it’s fair or not. And that’s why the perceived value of a service or product is usually greater than the actual one. The same visual identity seen time and again builds trust, and trust keeps customers coming back for more. It’s kind of like putting a face to a name—logos help people remember their experiences with companies.”*

To analyze and evaluate each service’s visual identity, I’ve broken down all the visual elements into the following groups:

- Main Logo
- Logo Variations
- Typography
- Graphical Elements
- Logo Anatomy
- Previous Logos
- Color Scheme

Emphasis is put onto logo, because it is the face of the brand. David Airey explains that a logoless company is like a faceless man. If we close our eyes and try to think of McDonald, it is very likely that we will see two golden arches forming the letter ‘M’. He suggests that most of the time, people think of the visual identity before the product itself. Strong brands like Apple, Ford or Target can remind people of them even without showing the logos. It is very important to “put on your best face”<sup>34</sup>, and logo does just that.

I have combined the two lists of brand identity ‘ideals’ from two books<sup>35</sup>, ‘Designing Brand Identity’ and ‘Logo Design Love’ to be used as an evaluator the five case studies visual identity. So, ideally, a great visual identity should have the following qualities:

VISION: Does the identity reflects the vision of the brand?

HARMONY: Does the whole identity goes well together?

HISTORY: Does it incorporate the traditions of the brand?

FLEXIBILITY: Can it be adjusted and used in various situations: different mediums, different sizes?

SIMPLICITY: Is the identity simple enough to remember? Does it have a single clear-cut feature that sticks to the memory?

ACCESSIBILITY: Can the identity speak with the audience?

Authenticity and Distinction: Is the design distinguished? Does it have a unique feelings into it? Can it set itself apart from the other brand competitors?

Followings are my evaluations on how well each of the five case studies’ visual identity perform under these qualities.

Visual Identity / Couchsurfing

34. Airey (2010)

35. The full list from both books can be found in Appendix A



Main logo and its anatomy	<div><div>Letter mark Initials</div><div></div><div>Pictorial mark World symbol on top of a couch</div><div>Letter mark Full brand name</div></div>		
Logo variations	<div><p>Used as the dominant logo on the website, situated on the top left corner of every page. It serves horizontal space nature of the web layout by moving the brand mark to the left of the letter mark.</p></div>	<div><p>Pictorial mark lone usage can be seen in 'About' sections or used as illustrations.</p></div>	<div><p>Initial letter mark alone is seen only on 'Verification' page.</p></div>
Previous logos	<div></div>		
Typography	<div><div>CouchSurfing</div><p>Letter mark, custom typeface.</p><p>Used only in the logo.</p><div>Menu Fonts</div><p>Megalopolis Extra (OpenType), free licensed font from SMeLtery. (smeltery.net/fonts/megalopolis-extra)</p><p>Used in:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Main, top navigation</li><li>-Categorical text</li></ul><div>Headline Fonts</div><p>PT Sans Narrow – Bold (OpenType), free licensed font from Google Webfonts. (google.com/webfonts)</p><p>Used in:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Headlines, found only in corporate-related areas</li></ul><div>Body Text</div><p>Verdana, and Verdana – Bold (standard websafe fonts)</p><p>Used in:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-All body text</li><li>-Topic titles</li></ul><div>Button Text</div><p>Arial (standard websafe fonts)</p><p>Used in:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-All text in buttons</li></ul></div>		
Color scheme	<div></div>		
Graphical elements	<div><div>Location: Places &gt;&gt; Europe</div><div>See FriendsSee Contact ListPrint</div><div>References (5)</div><div><div>5 Positive0 Neutral0 Negative</div><div>1 From Hosts2 From Surfers1 Traveling</div></div><div><div>Ibrahim is looking for a host!</div><div>Read request</div><div>or show more surfers</div></div><div><div>Surf</div><div>Find a Group:</div><div>Go</div></div><div></div></div>		

*Vision.* The logo consist of pictorial mark of a couch and a globe, which communicates how the whole world is connected through any couch. The color scheme and the hand-drawn custom typeface on the letter mark creates a friendly atmosphere. These reflect well the meaningful and hospital connections the brand sets out to be.

*Harmony.* The overall elements on the site seem to only go together to a certain extent. Due to the site's long history through major redesigns, some old designs still exist and mixed with the new ones. For example, the 'couch availability' icon is still visualized with bit-map style while the others have vector-drawn pictogram style. Profile and DIscussion pages still have the look of the old design while Dashboard and Activity already implement the new design. In promotional videos, the typefaces used are different from the rest of the identity. All these contribute to make the brand feel inconsistent.

*History.* The continuum of the brand is well reflected within the logo, with the motifs of a couch, a globe and hand-drawn typefaces visible. One main element that is omitted is the surf board, which is a good decision since the logo already has too many elements as it is. And the terminology to 'couchsurf' is more a cultural meaning than a literal one.

*Accessibility.* The added pictorial marks (couch + globe) give the whole brand more accessibility, since the Couchsurfing users are not necessarily English-speaking. As written in 'Building Brand Identity', "To sell products internationally, your brand has to speak a lot of different languages. Fortunately, easy-to-identify symbols need no translation. Recognizable regardless of culture or language, symbols enable companies to cross language barriers, compete globally, and maintain brand consistency across a wide range of media."<sup>36</sup> The site also implement multi-language translation function, making it feels very open and accessible.

*Flexibility.* Couchsurfing logo various components makes the system fairly flexible, with all the three parts in the anatomy can be a used as a stand-alone logo in itself. The pictorial form of the globe, however, can be hard to recognize once scaled down into smaller sizes.

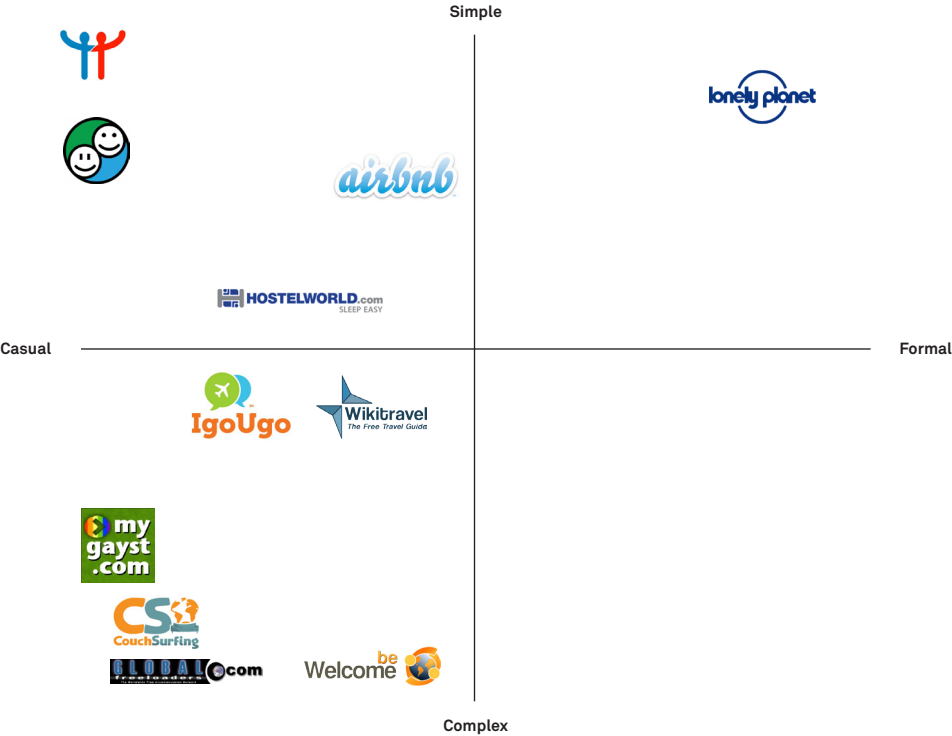
*Simplicity.* The main logo is far from simple, with four elements cramped together. Even on the website, the first variation employed on every page (except landing page) is surrounded with thick white border, adding another layer of unnecessary complexity. A total of five typefaces were used for the

37. Related links are collected from Alexia.com and similarsitesearch.com

whole brand, which is excessive.

*Authenticity and Distinction.* There is a moderate level of authenticity in the logo, with the combination of a couch and a globe probably not used by many, if any. This is how Couchsurfing logo compares to other related hospitality services.<sup>37</sup>

Visual Identity / Kickstarter



Main logo and its anatomy	<div><div>KICKSTARTER</div><div>Letter mark</div><div>Full brand name</div></div>		
Logo variations	<div><div>KICKSTARTER</div><div>Main logo used as the dominant logo on the website, situated on the top left corner of every page.</div></div>	<div><div>K</div><div>Badge logo, used where space is limited. For example, as a favicon.</div></div>	
Typography	<div><div>KICKSTARTER</div><div>Letter mark, custom typeface.</div><div>Used only in the logo.</div></div> <div><div>One Type Fits All</div><div>Helvetica – Regular, Bold and Italics (standard websafe font)</div><div>Used in: 90% of all the text.</div></div> <div><div>“Quotations”</div><div>Georgia – Italics (standard websafe font)</div><div>Used in: Quotation praising Kickstarter in ‘Start Project’ page.</div></div>		
Color scheme	<div><div></div><div></div></div>		
Graphical elements	<div><div><div>Project of the Day</div><div><div></div></div></div><div><div>29% funded</div><div>\$2,224 pledged</div><div>18 days to go</div></div><div><div>Home</div><div>Updates 0</div><div>Backers 48</div><div>Comments 0</div></div><div><div>Back This Project</div><div>\$1 minimum pledge</div></div><div><div>funded with</div><div>KICKSTARTER</div></div><div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div></div>		

*Vision.* Kickstarter logo and brand identity do not communicate the vision well. The keywords in its vision statement such as ‘spread fast and wide’, ‘large group of people’, ‘creative’, ‘source of money’ or ‘encouragement’ are not reflected into the visual identity. However, the logotype has similarity with cut-out typeface that can be reminded of crafts or graffiti—both creative activities—to a certain extent. The color green can reflect freshness and the color of money.

*Harmony.* The identity is harmonious and well-controlled throughout the website, with its corporate green applied as the main identity element.

*History.* Started out in 2009, it has never been through identity redesigns.

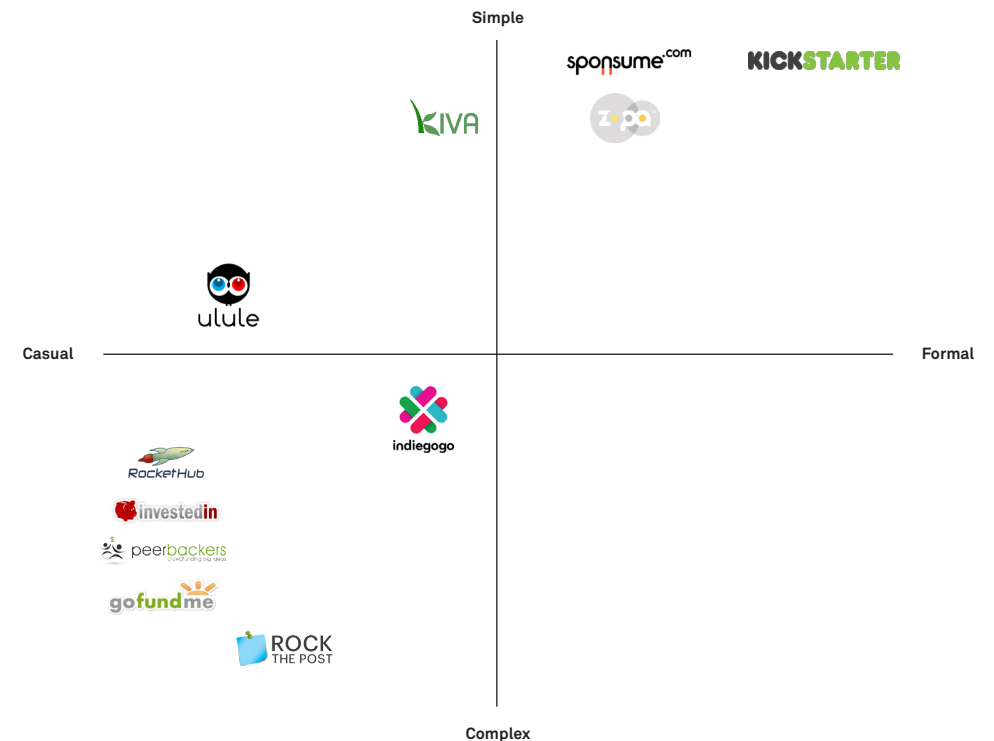
*Accessibility.* Considering that the service is now solely focused on projects started in the U.S. and the U.K., it is understandable that there is not yet language or accessibility support, e.g. pictorial marks or logotype in other languages implemented.





*Flexibility.* The additional logo badge gives the identity nice flexibility where horizontal space may fall short. While the full letter mark itself is legible in smaller sizes.

*Simplicity.* The identity design is very simple in Kickstarter, but perhaps too simple. While it is on one hand very good to keep the identity minimum as the focus should be on the projects presented on the website, only green color and small symbols are visible for Kickstarter identity. Together with the choice of generic typeface like Helvetica, the identity lacks character and if the logo is covered up, the service can be anything using green color.

*Authenticity and Distinction.* Cut-out typography is heavily overused. Accompanied by only green color as supporting element is simply not enough to create a unique or distinguishable identity. Introduction of typeface with more character or simple graphical elements can certainly improve this aspect.

Visual Identity / Skillshare



Main logo and its anatomy			
Typography	<div>  <div> <p>Full corporate custom typeface</p> <p>Used only for the logo.</p> </div> </div> <div> <p><b>Identity Typeface</b></p> <p><b>Proxima Nova Soft – Medium</b>  Licensed font by Mark Simonson  (myfonts.com/fonts/marksimonson/proxima-nova-soft)</p> <p>Used in:  - Some taglines, especially marketing text</p> </div> <div> <p><b>One Type Fits All</b></p> <p><b>Helvetica Neue – Regular, Bold and Italics</b>  Licensed font by Linotype  (linotype.com/1266/neuehelvetica-family.html)</p> <p>Used in:  - Almost all of the text</p> </div>		
Color scheme			
Graphical elements			

*Vision.* Skillshare's identity strongly reflects the vision of 'teaching', 'learning' and 'sharing', with its signature elements being lines of two colors connected together forming shapes and letterforms. The color scheme is also refreshing and vibrant, trying to emulate the sense of 'curiosity.'

*Harmony.* The visual identity is well applied across the platform with very high consistency. There is hardly any element that looks out of place, except for the use of photographic images (discussed in Association section, p. 84.)

*History.* Started out in 2011, it has never been through identity redesigns.

*Accessibility.* As a startup, Skillshare now solely focuses on customers in the U.S.. But in order to expand further, as some teachings are best done in local languages, accessibility support would help. The logo design by itself can also be improved with pictorial mark or something abstractly understandable across the globe regarding teaching, learning and sharing.

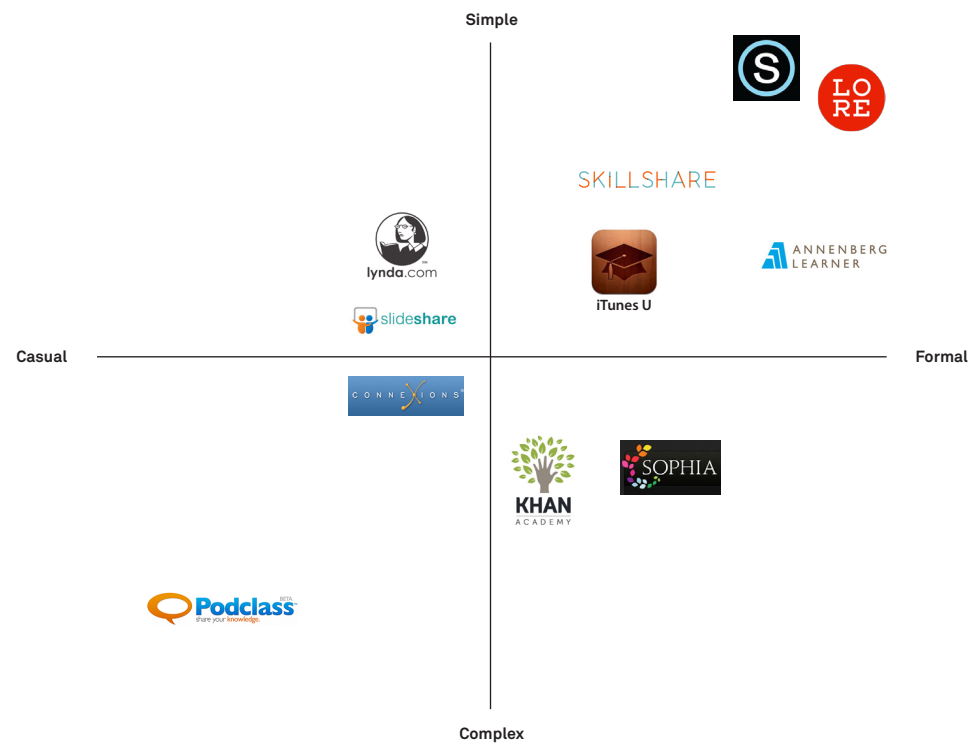
*Flexibility.* Skillshare identity lacks flexibility in many ways. First, the logo does not have an alternative version to accommodate tight space. It also looks weak and thin when scaled into smaller sizes. The connecting lines identity of turquoise and orange can be problematic when used against darker background, and back-up solution is not apparent.

The identity is not simple enough for other designers to replicate if the brand wishes to produce more materials. The base identity is characteristic enough, adding flexibility for use into it would be welcoming.

*Simplicity.* While the identity design is rather complex, the elements on the web are kept simple. By not overusing the identity in the site, 90 per cent of the page remains neutral and does not interfere with the class contents, which is appropriate.

*Authenticity and Distinction.* Highly unique and recognizable. The identity is created from scratch, and with a non standard web-font in Proxima Nova Soft and original color scheme added, Skillshare has possibly one of the most original identity among the case studies.

Visual Identity / Craigslist



Main logo and its anatomy	<div> <b>Letter mark</b> Full brand name         </div>		
Logo variations	<p>Main logo used as the dominant logo on the website, situated on the top left corner of homepage only.</p>	<p>Badge logo – symbolic mark for peace, used where space is limited. For example, a flavicon.</p>	<p>Nickname for Craigslist, found on the top left corner of every page, along with breadcrumb navigations.</p>
Typography	<b>everything</b> Default browser serif font Used in: - Main logo - Headlines and body text	<b>menus</b> Default browser sans-serif font Used in: - Navigational menus	
Color scheme			
Graphical elements			



38. Some redesign suggestions can be found at: [www.wired.com/entertainment/theweb/magazine/17-09/ff\\_craigslist\\_makeover](http://www.wired.com/entertainment/theweb/magazine/17-09/ff_craigslist_makeover)

**Vision.** Craigslist’s identity is the most unorthodox among the case studies. With strong vision to serve communities with no profit agenda comes the anti-design approach. It does not try to force any existential identity into the users’ memories. All the elements including the is logo so ubiquitous anyone can simply create it using Times New Roman. Moreover, by not capitalizing the name ‘craigslist’, it brings out the sense of ‘for-everyone’ and ‘equality.’

**Harmony.** Highly harmonious, with virtually only textual texture on the web and very minimum use of graphical elements. Combination of ‘Helvetica’ and ‘Times New Roman’, blue and purple colors of active links and visited links are consistent throughout.

**History.** Since 2001, the site design has remained virtually unchanged and uses only minimal CSS and JavaScript, a design philosophy common in the late 1990s, so the identity is actually history itself in that sense.

**Accessibility.** Craigslist support the use of multiple language apart from English such as Catalan, Danish, Dutch, English, Filipino, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Portugese, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, and more. This makes Craigslist the most accessible identity-wise among the case studies.

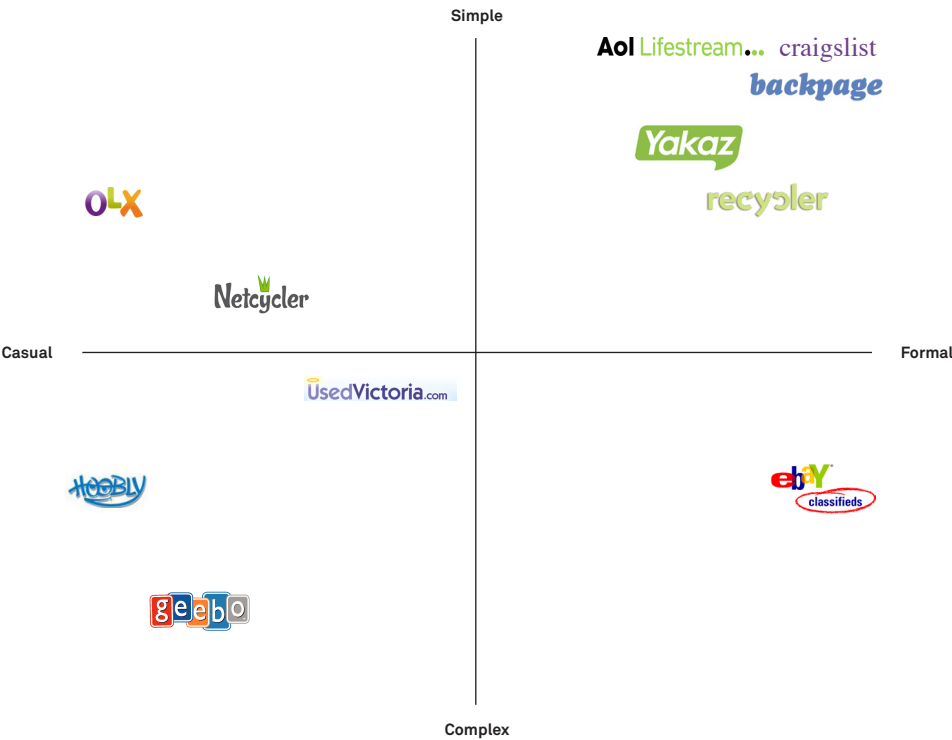
**Flexibility.** The purple peace symbol offers an alternative use off the main logo, with ‘CL’ being used as a nickname, making the identity very flexible.

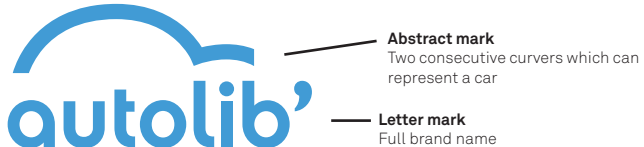



The coding on the web does not even specify ‘Times New Roman’ as the font to display the logo, but only determine it as ‘serif font’. This shows that the brand does not really care and strict how the logo will be seen or that there is the ‘one’ version of correct logo.

**Simplicity.** It is very hard to imagine any identity design that is simpler than of Craigslist’s.

**Authenticity and Distinction.** This is arguable. Can extreme anti-design be considered authentic? I personally think so. What makes Craigslist so unique and authentic is the adamance to keep it the way it is without adopting newer web technology, be it Flash, HTML5 or CSS3, making it stands out from the rest. There are many design suggestions done to Cragislist<sup>38</sup> (both free and being offered to Craig Newman professionally), but he refuses to change and tries to keep it the way it is for the sake of usability.

Visual Identity / Autolib’

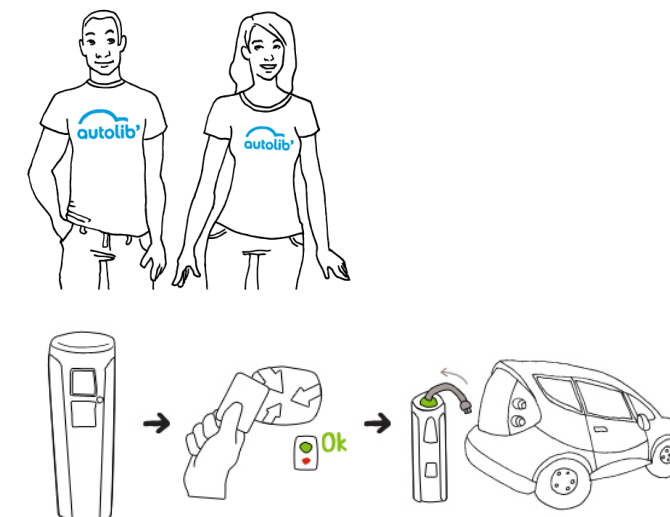
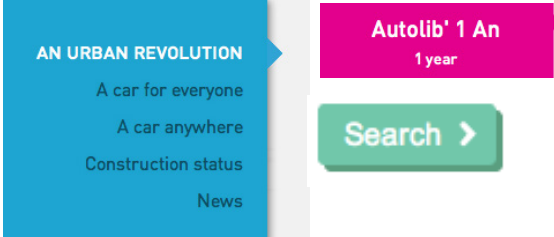


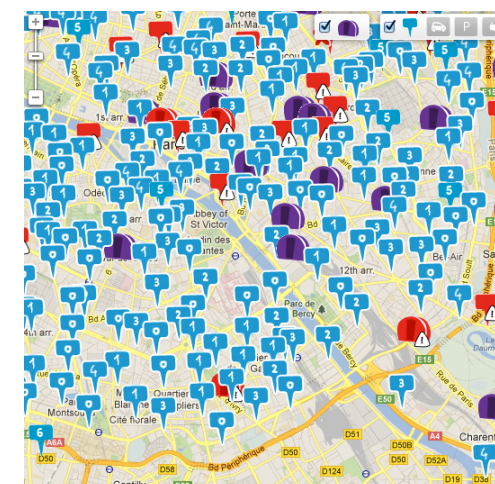
Main logo and its anatomy	
Logo variations	<div><p>Main logo used as the dominant logo on the website, situated on the top left corner of homepage only.</p></div> <div><p>Badge logo – abstract mark, used where space is limited. For example, a flavicon.</p></div>
Typography	<div><div><p><b>autolib'</b></p><p><b>AUTOLIB'</b></p><p>Utility Font</p><p>Headline</p><p>Body Text</p></div><div><p>Letter mark, custom typeface.</p><p><b>Koernersans</b> Identity custom-made font Designed by Körner Union</p><p><b>FF DIN – Regular and Bold</b> Corporate font <a href="http://dinfont.com/">http://dinfont.com/</a></p><p><b>Georgia – Regular and Bold</b> (standard websafe font)</p><p><b>Verdana – Regular</b> (standard websafe font)</p></div><div><p>Used only in the logo.</p><p>Used in: - Menus - Highlighted text - Headlines</p><p>Used in: - Sub-menus - Lead body text - Body text (prints)</p><p>Used in: - Headlines</p><p>Used in: -Body text (online)</p></div></div>
Color scheme	

Graphical elements



## Graphical elements (continued)



*Vision.* The visual identity reflects with ‘clean environment’ Autolib’ envisions, with colorful hand drawn typeface and contemporary illustration giving sense of ‘urban lifestyle.’ The logo has a sense of leaping forward (the curves as jumping line) while also representing a car (going forward—from left to right), with blue color signifying clean, electric energy.

*Harmony.* The overall visual identity is harmonious, but consistency can be improved. Typographic hierarchy is rather illogical when utilizing four type-faces with no clear rule. Some headlines may use Georgia while others may use DIN or the custom Koerner Sans. The rainbow color scheme is too much for users to remember or making any sense out of them, making it very hard to grasp its true identity.

*History.* Started out in 2011, it has never been through identity redesigns.

*Accessibility.* One great thing about Autolib identity is that it really gives an attempt to be universal and appealing to everyone. While the target users as of now are French-speaking, they opted to set up the site in .eu instead of .fr, with the default web of the site in English (this is perhaps the browser detects the IP of the viewer and directed them to proper language setting, which is a thoughtful decision.)

The use of illustrations greatly eliminate the ‘subjectivity’ of photography (age, gender, race, social status, or even time and place) thus universalizing the images so that everyone can relate to. This technique is true for cartoons, the simpler they are, they more universally appealing they can be. When photography is presented, they try to make sure to cover widest demographic range possible.

Moreover, the logo has abstract mark on top of the letter mark, making it fairly understandable for those who don’t know what ‘Auto’ or ‘Lib’ mean, that the service is related to car or transportation.

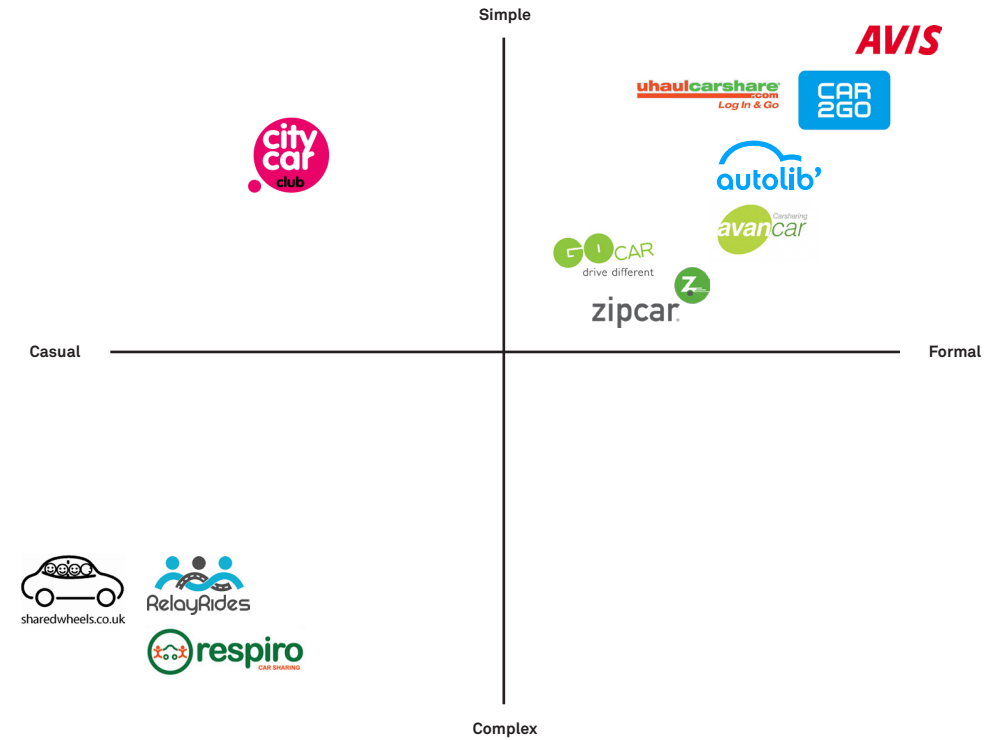
*Flexibility.* The styling of Autolib’ is very flexible, and perhaps too flexible, with multiple color scheme to choose from, no strict rule on typography and the illustrations not overly complicated to replicate. The logo also allows the use of the curves as badge logo, with varied colors allowed.

*Simplicity.* While the logo is simple and focused, the whole identity is not so, with the use of multiple typefaces, multiple color-coding and good amount of photography and illustrations mixed together.

*Authenticity and Distinction.* The overall identity is too open and flexible it is

hard to grasp what is the core idea. Trying to use many elements at the same time makes it very difficult for users to remember and distinct its identity. The logo itself is very well designed, but the execution is short of originality.

6-Point Analysis



39. van Leeuwen and Carey  
(2004, p.92)

40. Ibid., p.94.

Through the brand-produced photography, it is embedded in there semiotically how the brand imagine its connection with the users. Photographic images analysis is a common tool used to inquire such associations. Photographic images are focused because they offer direct associations as they can demonstrate and able to make the users imagine themselves in the same situations, roles and context within those images.

The analysis in this part is to critically judge whether the case studies have used photographic images, both still and moving, appropriately and in accordance with its vision and goals.

From 'Handbook of Visual Analysis', Theo van Leeuwen and Carey Jewitt explain how to apply the Barthean semiotics for analyzing images' representations and meanings. The aim of semiotic and iconography approach "ask the same two fundamental questions: the question of representation (what do images represent and how?) and the question of 'hidden meanings' of images (what ideas and values do the people, places and things represented in images stand for?)"<sup>39</sup> Two layers of visual semiotics were analyzed. "The first layer is the layer of denotation, of 'what, or who, is being depicted here?'. The second layer is the layer of connotation, of 'what ideas and values are expressed through what is represented, and through the way in which it is represented?'"<sup>40</sup>

Following subjects will be considered during the analysis:

- categorization: what are the elements seen in the photos?
- groups vs. individual: are people depicted in group or individuals?
- surrounding text: is there are any captions, text or adjacent pictures to be taken account into? It also includes voice over text or music.
- distancing: how far is the viewer from those elements?
- contact: do the people depicted make contact with the viewers?

Are they shown in frontal or in profile?

- point of view: what is the angle the image is being depicted? Is it low, eye-level, or high angle?

- salience: what objects are being focused or clearly stand out?

- modality: are the images depicted realistically? Are there any filters or distortions.

Associations / Couchsurfing

#### IMAGES THE BRAND TRYING TO ASSOCIATE USERS WITH

The headscarf connotes ethnicity, with grass field and windmill connotes



country side, or somewhere that is not in usual environments we may see everyday in the cities. The act of lying down, smiling and eye contact to the viewer implicate personal and intimate relationship trying to established with the viewer. It is also impalpable that the girl is the 'local host' mentioned in the text. Intended message is clear that you can travel to new places and stay with friendly local hosts, like the girl in the picture.

The environments of the beach suggests tropical weather and typical depic-



tion of holiday and relaxation. Group of people connotes sense of togetherness, with the surrounding text suggesting that people in the images are your 'surfers' that you may host. The rear, long-shot connotes generalization, lacks of personal relationship and that people seen can simply be anyone. The tinted modality somewhat romanticizes the image and takes realism out of it.

There are a total of three videos describing how Couchsurfing work: Surfing,





41. van Leeuwen and Carey (2004)

Hosting and Activities. All of them share the same visual style with slightly different narrative with slightly different actors, so there is no need to analyze them separately.

The variety of people and places in the video connotes that users of Couchsurfing can be very varied, regardless of gender, age, race, and place of origin. Different activities, mostly engagement between hosts and surfers with smiles and laughs suggest that relationships between hosts and surfers are personal, intimate and full of hospitality.

Authentic feeling is connoted through use of close-up shots with surrounding text describing the person's name and place of origin. Frontal shots imply that importance is given to the subject, but by not making direct eye contact to the viewers, the demand or the pressure is not being directed to them. Instead this is more like an 'offer' as van Leeuwen and Jewitt wrote, "Without this kind of 'imaginary contact' we look quite differently at the people inside the picture frame. We 'observe' them in a detached way and impersonally as though they are specimens in a display case. They call such pictures 'offers' – an 'offer of information' is made."<sup>41</sup> So the interviewee's monologue main purpose is to give the information (indirectly) to the users in an intimate way.

Videos are shot realistically with no artificial lighting or special effects connote that the situations depicted in the video are something target audience (new users) can actually experience from joining Couchsurfing. The way the shot was set up especially in the interviews without or little use of artificial lighting and hand-held shots add to the video realism.

IMAGES THE BRAND REPRESENTS ITSELF

Hugged group of people connote togetherness, friendship, happiness, inti-

42. van Leeuwen and Kress (1996)



macy and teamwork. There is no one particularly in focus, which means no individual is important than the team. Frontal image with eye contact from below is a 'demand' picture.

"Many pictures show people who, from inside the picture frame, look directly at the viewer. In this way they 'make contact' with the viewers, establish a (association) relation with them. They call such pictures 'demand' pictures – the people in the picture symbolically demand something from the viewer... they can demand pity, by pleading up to them..."<sup>42</sup>, in this case, they are looking up, which I don't see it as demanding pity, but more that they are ready to be at service, and demand our attention, our trust. The choice of angle, even though ill-suited, is probably chosen due to practicality of taking group picture. Realistic modality together with amateurish feeling suggests that these people are actually the ones behind Couchsurfing, not hired models.

On the website, next to the image reads a large headline: 'Our mission is simple: To create inspiring experiences.' Realistic modality suggests these people are there to do their mission as stated in the surrounding text.

CONCLUSION



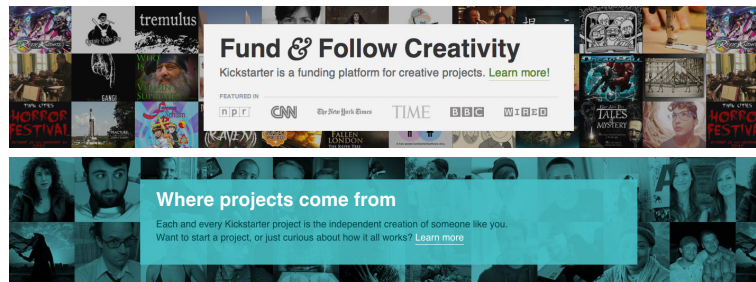
In general, Couchsurfing's use of photographic images to associate themselves with the audience is in accordance with their vision and is well chosen. Personal, authentic and friendly feelings are conveyed, where users can relate to through depictions of travelling, hosting and surfing experience. It is crucial that they try to include all gender, age and race into their images, this is especially well done in the video, which can be said that is more professionally done than the still images.

However, sense of imperfection and unprofessionalism exist. The wrong choice of image, for example, the 'surfers' one can send out wrong message to the viewer—that the surfers are completely anonymous, uninterested, and that there are many of them more than the hosts—or even make the whole brand look inconsistent by using images that are stock-image like. The quality of the brand's representation is also questionable, with poorly-lit lighting, untidy environment and inappropriate angel used—making it difficult to really trust that these people are the ones reliable to deliver their promises.

Associations / Kickstarter

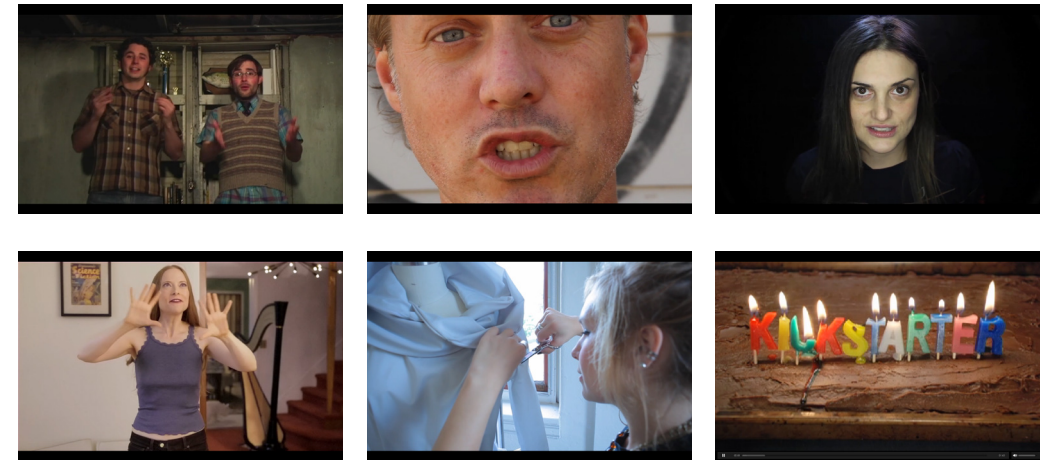
#### IMAGES THE BRAND TRYING TO ASSOCIATE USERS WITH

Mixture of photographs, illustrations, graphical elements and portraits



arranged in a grid-like pattern connote that there are many projects and creators already involved with Kickstarter. The surrounding text indicates the images tiled behind in the back are project examples. The tiled pattern connotes equality and variety. By giving each project and its creator equal share of space, it implies that Kickstarter is a platform where every single project is equal. It also sends out a message that this platform is about the users, the starters, not about themselves. The tinted color connotes that each individual is brought together to pursue their creative goals together.

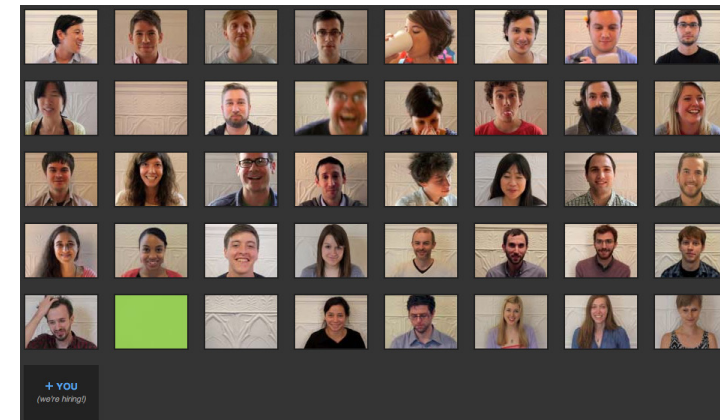
Few photographic images are used in Kickstarter's identity, but in addition



to that, there is a video that invites people to start a project with them. The technique used by the animation is the same as in still images – it is a collage of each project's introductory video to their own projects, mixed together to connote the variety and creative nature of Kickstarter. It also sends out a message that the platform is about the project creators, not about Kickstarter themselves, and that many people have already participated.

43. Kickstarter-Team (2012)

In the team page, five portraits are animated in synchronization for a short



period of time, then animation continues on to the next boxes. After each animation, the portrait stays still until the loop comes back.<sup>43</sup>

Mixture of portraits with the same background connotes that these single individuals work together in the same office, which is of Kickstarter's. Different

expressions, mostly smiling connotes individualism, friendliness, happiness, that Kickstarter is a place that you can enjoy being yourself. Individuals in tiled pattern suggest that each individual has equally his/her own space (literally and expressively), yet all being a part of one big group. Surrounding text at the bottom box reads, '+YOU (we're hiring!)' is an invitation to join their team, as the empty box is equal and in line with the rest of the portraits.

#### CONCLUSION

Kickstarter employs few photographic images, just like the way visual identity is used minimally. Both of them are used in a very consistent manner, making the brand and its message strong. The emphasis is again and again about individualism, equality and creativity. Even on the team page, every one in the team is given equal share of space. When associating themselves with Kickstarter, the users, especially the project creators can associate with feelings of total freedom to be themselves and to express their creativity with no boundary, as it is subtly communicated that Kickstarter will not interfere with their creative ideas.

Associations / Craigslist

Craigslist does not use any photographic images to associate themselves with the users.

Associations / Skillshare

#### IMAGES THE BRAND TRYING TO ASSOCIATE USERS WITH

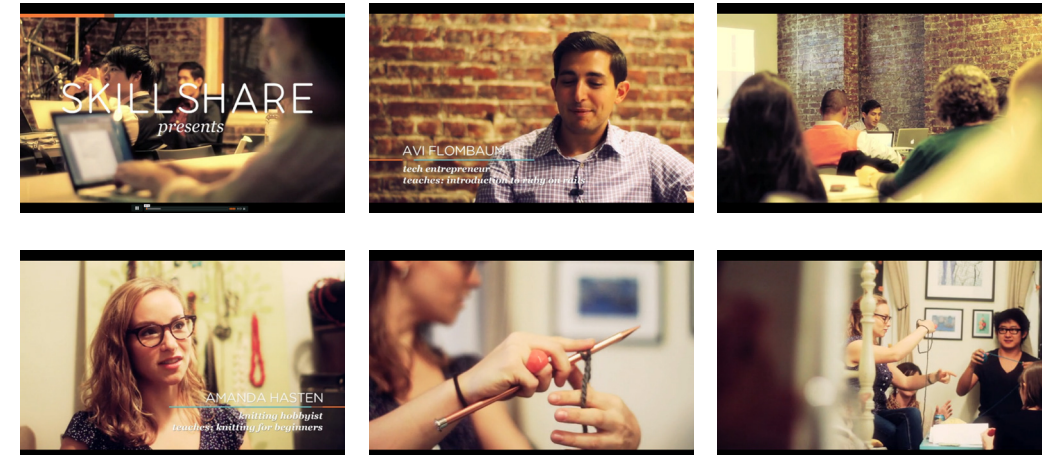
Skillshare has published photos under 'class photos' category in Flickr. The



categorizations in these images include: classroom, pencil and paper, study equipments, group of people listening to one person, aprons and cooking equipments, laughter and smiles. These connote clearly classroom environment with enthusiasm and joy. Most images put emphasis onto the teacher,

the center of the class. It could also be that by not exposing the students' face, users can easier imagine themselves being one of them. Modality is realistic, connoting that the situation depicted in the image is something users can actually experience if joining Skillshare's classes.

The 'Teacher's Stories' series consist of short videos (about 90 seconds long)



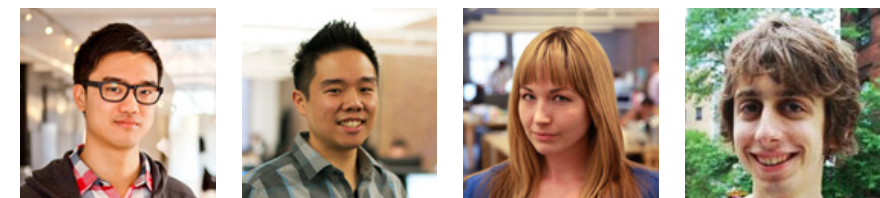
interviewing teachers who have used Skillshare as a platform for their teachings to different extents.

There are basically two kinds of shot in the video, a close up interview with the teacher and a medium to long shot capturing the atmosphere of the class or the students. Each teacher is presented with his/her name and position/background. Importance is given to the subject, but by not making direct eye contact to the viewers, making these 'offer' pictures. The interviewee's monologue main purpose is to give the information (indirectly) to the users in an intimate way. The information purpose is to inspire the viewers to become teachers like them.

The images are colorized to have yellowish warm tone to connote friendliness and welcoming feeling, which matches with the background music mood.

#### IMAGES THE BRAND REPRESENTS ITSELF

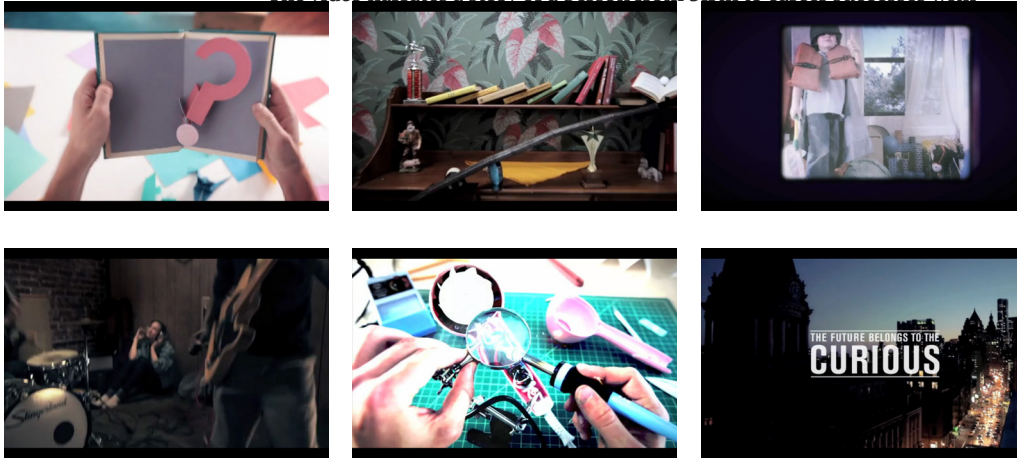
Staff photos consist of images showing individual portrait close ups. Same





environment background (except a few different) with same posture (except the latter ones) suggest a sense of togetherness, and that these people work in the same space. Each image shows frontal eye contact, connoting that each person exists as an individual reality, with 'demand' pictures that the viewers should trust them. The way each image is cropped displaying every portrait at the same size adds rigidity and corporate-like feeling to them. Modality is realistic showing these staffs are who they claim to be.

The video narrates a story of a person from birth to career successes with



many happenings along the way. The narration focuses on 'curiosity' with the ending text 'the future belongs to the curious'. The point of view of the whole video is taken from the first person's perspective, indicating that all these stories could happen to you—that is if you stay curious.

Salient objects shown in the video are a pop-up book with a question mark (symbolizing curiosity, asking questions) with the child's (viewer's) arms reaching out, books and bedroom objects making up a D.I.Y. machine that can turn on a TV, with applause (symbolizing creative play, with rewards at the end), 8 millimetre video camera (symbolizing movie making), an electric guitar (symbolizing music) and many more. These objects / activities are very diverse, but mostly associated with creativity or innovation.

If people are presented, they are shown in frontal face, with happy or encouraging emotions. The scene ended with big applaud, following by congratulated gestures from the person's (viewer's) wife, wrapped up with the ending text, concludes the message that all of these things shown could happen to you if you stay curious, and that you will have a great future.

While all the images are shot from real objects, the colorization, black soft vignette around the edges, the fast-cut editing, and visual-effected

transition greatly reduces video's realism level.

There is also to date, one short introductory video explaining a course on how



to become a good teacher in Skillshare. This is the only course hosted by the Skillshare team themselves.

The video is shot in a studio in an isolated environment (presumably a studio) with white background. The subject is shot with a close up and medium shot, showing her frontal with the medium shot making direct contact with the viewer, establishing 'demand' pictures, persuading them to join the course. Apart from artificial background, the modality is very realistic with no background music. The monologue is giving information more than telling stories.

#### CONCLUSION

While the Skillshare graphical identity was carefully and professionally designed, the photographic images have fall short.

The photo stream on Flickr, while taken beautifully, there seems to be lack of direction what and how should be captured. How the faces should be shown, how far the shot can be (some are way too long of a shot to establish any intimate relationship, while some are so close up that it does not even connote the sense of a class anymore). The staff portraits are very well and professionally taken at first, with the consistent angle and background, but that seems to be forgotten later on, putting the sense of disorder and carelessness into the brand.

Lastly, the videos show the most inconsistent of all. The 'Manifesto' video tries to be cutting-edge and playful, it connotes a sense of unreality (users can not really relate themselves to the narration, as it is very superficial) and push the brand towards a creative or fashion brand, while the other two are clearly not. The 'Teacher's Stories' series create heart-warming and relaxed atmosphere and trying to establish of personal and intimate relationship with the viewer, which is well done but different from the first. The worst among all is the 'Introductory' video. While trying to look professional with the shots being taken in the studio, it lacks either the cutting-edge playfulness or intimacy displayed in the first two. It simply stands alone as a third

category of video. So all of the three videos have little in commons and lacks consistency.

With its inconsistency, it is difficult for the viewers to establish their clear associations with the brand. Should they feel that the brand is professionally reliable, or cutting-edge and daring, or a bit less professional and relaxed? The paradox and contrast the use photographic images have intentionally set have compromised its professionalism, which is unfortunate considering that the graphical elements were so well-made and controlled.

Associations / Autolib'

#### IMAGES THE BRAND REPRESENTS ITSELF

Three different individuals represent a mixture of race and gender, all



wearing Autolib' t-shirt connoting that they work for the company. Artificial background indicates that the image is shot in a studio or has been retouched. Even though the three persons look realistic, the white artificial background and the text destroys the naturalism of the photo, making it hard to imagine that users will actually meet these three personnels. It seems that they are only professional models. Semi-close up view with direct eye contact intends to focus viewer's attention to their facial expression, with 'demand' to join them. The expression gives the sense of friendliness, confidence and happiness to the viewers, persuading to them to be a part of Autolib'. Modality is semi-realistic, as mentioned about the background.

Autolib' has created a professional-looking video to explain and demonstrate



how its ecosystem works and the benefits from using their service.

There are basically two sets of shots during the whole video: outside and inside the car. While outside the car, most of the shot will be long to very long shots, with the car as the main focus running through different environments—both nature and urban. The former symbolizes that the car is friendly to the environment and the latter symbolizes urban lifestyle utilities.

While inside the car, the shots will be medium or close up, to focus on the expression and feelings of the supposed users. They are mostly shown with their face frontal, but there is no eye contact to the camera, so they simply act as 'offer' pictures, giving information about the benefits (both tangible benefits like using GPS and intangible benefits like happiness and enjoyment.) The portrayed users in the video are across all age, gender and race.

There are surrounding hand-drawn identity elements and types popping up from time to time to literally explain the service benefits.

#### CONCLUSION

In my opinion, Autolib' has done the best job in creating brand associations that really goes hand-in-hand with the brand vision and its target audience. With the ultimate goal to be the appealing transportation choice for urban users, Autolib' has utilized the young and open visual style through the use of illustrations, the professional feeling to give people confidence about the car's and payment's reliability, and the carefulness to include all age, gender and race when photographic images are present.

6-Point Analysis

44. *Usability Basics* (2012)

45. Matera et al. (2006, p. 18)

46. Nielsen (1994)

47. Matera et al. (2006)

48. Nielsen (1994)

In general, usability refers to how well users can learn and use a product / service to achieve their goals and how satisfied they are with that process.<sup>44</sup> Usability does not just test a single aspect but a combination of factors. Usability is extremely crucial in deciding if a brand succeed or fail. For example, it does not matter how well a certain handbag brand designs its visual identity, crafted brilliant brand associations or has great PR. If the bag fails to perform, rips apart too soon or uncomfortable to hold, the brand will never be successful.

For this analysis, I focused on website's usability since all the collaborative consumption services rely heavily on their online platforms to perform.

To date, there are several methods that can be used to test a website usability, e.g. Think aloud protocol, Remote usability testing, Focus groups and Interviews. All yields different requirements, applicable stages, advantages and disadvantages.

From the research paper 'Web Usability: Principles and Evaluation Methods', 'Inspection Methods' is proposed to be ideal solution for time and cost effectiveness.<sup>45</sup> It reads, "According to such methods evaluators examine usability related aspects of an application, trying to detect violations of established usability principles<sup>46</sup>, and then provide feedback to designers about possible design improvements. The inspectors can be usability specialists, or also designers and engineers with special expertise (e.g., knowledge of specific domains or standards)."<sup>47</sup>

By this definition, I will be acting as an inspector with the knowledge in graphic / user interface design domains. In order to inspect them in the same manner, I will be using cognitive walkthrough inspection method. In cognitive walkthrough, the user's problem solving process—what the users will do in specific situations of use and why—is simulated.<sup>48</sup> Evaluators go through the interface step by step using a task scenario, and discuss the usability issues as they arise.

There are about 2-4 walkthrough tasks in each services, mostly covering the basic functionality that it promises the user. For example, in Couchsurfing, users will expect to be able to join the community, find a host to surf and host a surfer.

These scenarios will be created and written down before I perform a walkthrough. The writings in this thesis is the documentation of the outcome. Since the thesis focuses on the visual part of the service, I concentrated mostly in the user interface, which should meet the following standard list:

- Strive for consistency
- Cater for universal usability
- Offer informative feedback
- Design task flows to yield closure
- Prevent errors
- Permit easy reversal of actions
- Make users feel they are in control
- Minimize short-term memory load

The list was one of the best-known lists of user interface design guidelines, created by Shneiderman and Plaisant in 2009.<sup>49</sup>

I concluded each walkthrough with brief conclusions and a list of positive and negative findings. For full inspection walkthrough, along with screenshots and descriptions and remarks, please refer to Appendix B.

### Usability / Couchsurfing

From the introduction, these are the basic functionalities Couchsurfing promise to offer to users:

1. Search and stay with the locals wherever members wish to travel.
2. Host members from around the world.
3. Participate in activities hosted by its members.
4. Get advice and ideas when planning a trip using in-site forums.

### WALKTHROUGH SCENARIO

I assume the role of a new user, William Toads from Stockholm who has just heard about Couchsurfing and has decided to give it a try. Here are the specific tasks (go along and cover all the basic functionalities promised) I ran cognitive walkthrough with.

Task 1: Try to find a way to join the service

Task 2: For the whole month of September 2012, my couch is open to travelers. I am thinking that it would be nice to start off by hosting someone before try out surfing. It seems safer that way.

Task 3: After a successful hosting, now I am ready to surf. I want to travel to Copenhagen during the second weekend of October.

Task 4: Before leaving, I want to find some interesting touring information about Copenhagen, since I only have a couple of days to enjoy, I would like to get the best out of it.

### CONCLUSION

49. Johnson (2010)



50. In order to create a project with Kickstarter, one must satisfy Amazon Payment's regulations, and that restricts one to be a U.S. permanent resident.

*Positives:*

- High accessibility concern.
- Video guides are present at the right place and time, which is good

for new users.

- Error prevention, when something goes wrong, it gives users choice how to act next.

*Negatives:*

- Misleading navigation through inconsistent button design, obscure language and poor placement of user interface.
- Inconsistent use of UI, especially in colors and typefaces. There seems to be no rule when / how to use them.
- The mixed up between the old legacy design and the new design can cause confusion and uncertainty.
- Search function in groups have to be vastly improved to be really useful.

Inconsistency proves to be the most fatal issue with Couchsurfing, creating negative effects in all visual identity, associations and usability. It creates amateurish feelings that the service is not designed by proper professions. Or perhaps the design team are constantly changing, team after team works on top of another, adding layers of inconsistency.

While the multi-language features definitely bring in the sense of accessibility, preventing the obscure languages will greatly improve usability. Simplification of UI placement, typography and color logical issues should also be implemented.

Usability / Kickstarter

From the introduction, these are the basic functionalities Kickstarter promise to offer to users:

1. Learn about Kickstarter
2. Create a fund-raising creative project.
3. Fund a project.

WALKTHROUGH SCENARIO

I assumed the role of a new user, William Toads, a type designer from New York city, NY.<sup>50</sup> William has heard of Kickstarter for sometime through several media outlets and design blogs, but never really checked it out properly, but figured it's about time.

Task 1: Find out in details how Kickstarter works, especially how to

create a project.

Task 2: Support an upcoming interesting Windows Phone game project.

Task 3: Since I'm a type designer, I'd to start a new project for creating a new typeface, and use the funding I get to make a living in the meanwhile. All supporters will get the font I finished in return.

CONCLUSION

*Positives:*

- Giving user almost complete control of information, not showing or moving anything automatically.
- Use of layman language
- Well-designed level of information, with information on demand.
- Very detailed helps and guidelines
- No need to use memory as information is always recalled in place where needed.
- Less use of graphical elements boosts the web performance.

*Negatives:*

- Poor searching / browsing mechanism.
- Feeling of inequality and bias in projects listing.
- No language support.

While its visual identity is average and not very exciting, it is usability where Kickstarter really excels. The layouts make sense. There is no information flooding, Kickstarter have controlled well how much should be shown now, what should be hidden to be revealed on demand. User has no need to remember all the complicated details when the related information is always available in the right place at the right time. What is most striking of all is how much users have control over what they want to do and see, especially when creating a project. No anxiety in losing the information or spending time inputting detailed information without seeing the big picture. If the searching and browsing mechanism can be improved, Kickstarter can very well represent one of the best usability standards for online services.

Usability / Craigslist

From the introduction, these are the basic functionalities Craigslist promise to offer to users:

1. Post a classified.
2. Find a classified that meets users' needs.

### 3. Participate in the community forum.

#### WALKTHROUGH SCENARIO

I assumed the role of a new user, William Toads from SOMA area in San Francisco who has just heard about Craigslist and that you can virtually find and post about anything. William has decided to give it a try. Here are the specific walkthrough tasks:

Task 1: William is interested in buying a used iPhone 4S since the new iPhone 5 came out.

Task 2: Living in San Francisco can be extremely expensive, and unfortunately his roommate just left for New York and William needs to post an ad to find a new roommate.

Task 3: William heard that community in Craigslist is very lively. He is a vegetarian and would like to get some input about nice vegetarian restaurants in town.

#### CONCLUSION

##### *Positives:*

- Very low learning curve
- Use of layman language, with explanations available when technical terms are present.
- High accessibility with many local websites and multi-language support.
- Warnings are always present with actions to act upon.
- Users always knows where they are the website with clear hierarchical navigation.

##### *Negatives:*

- Some inconsistency in graphics or typography—seems to have no clear rules where to use serif or sans serif, and whether or not to have grey-colored background
- Discussion forums present some challenge in learning, but is also considered the less important part of the web. The main objective is the classified area.

Craigslist represents one of the most user-friendly and easy-to-use websites around, not just within the collaborative consumption services. With almost no learning curve and very lo-fi interface, it brings down the threshold to the very low level. Regardless of age, gender, race, country, technological knowledge or devices used, almost everyone can enjoy the service altogether with equally pleasing experience.

Without a corporate board or shareholders to be answerable to, Craigslist were able to make decisions solely on excellent usability of the site (and keeping it that way), which has proven to be a key component in the success of this community for more than 17 years.

#### Usability / Skillshare

From the introduction, these are the basic functionalities Skillshare promise to offer to users:

1. Learn about Skillshare.
2. Host a class as a teacher.
3. Participate in a class as a student.

#### Walkthrough Scenario

I will assumed the role of a new user, William Toads from New York city, NY.<sup>51</sup> He just saw a friend recommending Skillshare in his Facebook feed and decided to check it out. He only knows that it's about local education marketplace. Here are the specific tasks that I will run cognitive walkthrough with. Here are the specific walkthrough tasks:

Task 1: Since Skillshare is relatively new, William wants to know what it is all about.

Task 2: He has been wanting to learn how to cook simple meals, and he loves Asian food, so he's looking for perhaps a Japanese, Korean or Thai cooking class.

Task 3: After successfully attending a class, William thought that he can earn some extra money this way by teaching one himself. He is thinking he will host a class on how to improve presentation skills.

#### CONCLUSION

##### *Positives:*

- Hierarchy of information is well presented. Information which needs attention gets highlighted with good space proportion.
- Consistent typography.
- Well-designed and standout buttons.
- Warnings and feedbacks are clear and instant.

##### *Negatives:*

- Obscure use of language with sometimes no explanation.
- Grouping of information is illogical.
- Choices are promoted with bias without explanation leading to user suspecting agenda behind or simply navigates to places not wanted by

51. Reason being that Skillshare's classes are still limited to few cities, New York City being one of them.

52. Autolib' services are still only available in some areas within France, Paris being the biggest one.

users.

- Inconsistency in layout when representing similar kind of content.
- Lacks sense of location, users can easily get lost of where they actually are in the website and no way to navigate back except 'Back' button.

While accessing Skillshare visual identity, I clearly could feel a sense of unique design language and good use of color and typography, but after assessing deeper into associations and usability, it is very unfortunate that Skillshare seem to fall short in these two areas. While overall UI is clean and well presented, many of the interactions are illogical and questionable. There is no navigation aiding users when going deeper into the site, and somehow the design tries to push users to click certain buttons and choose certain choices over the other without logical reasons. This can bring a sense of untrustworthy from the users of brand's hidden agendas, or simply intimidation, like saying to users that Skillshare know better than them, so click this and not that.

Usability / Autolib'

From the introduction, these are the basic functionalities Autolib' promise to offer to the users:

1. Subscribe to the appropriate program.
2. Locate and use the Bluecar.
3. Return the Bluecar to its designated location.

WALKTHROUGH SCENARIO

I assumed the role of a new user, William Toads from Paris, France.<sup>52</sup> William reads on LeParisian newspaper about a new service being employed in Paris called Autolib', which is a car equivalent to Vélib' bike sharing service. He is very pleased for the news because he couldn't afford a car but is constantly in need of private transportation.

Task 1: He wants to find out how the whole service works.

Task 2: He would like to sign up for the service with suitable payment option.

Task 3: Now that he's signed up, he would like to locate where he can use the rental cars.

CONCLUSION

Positives:

- Consistent visual language and layout, with few minor contradictions.
- Well-designed level of information, with information on demand.
- Step-by-step navigation.

Negative:

- Color coding is illogical
- Inconsistent typography.
- Obscure technical language.
- Banner is too proportionally big and too distracting on every page (should only be used on Homepage to attract attention.)

In general, Autolib' usability is solid and the tasks can be completed with ease without any major confusions or errors. It is not bad, but not great either. The biggest issue for me is the size of the banner which takes up too much space on every page. The sub-menu can simply be a line of text or tabs. Some minor issues found here and there as mentioned during the walkthrough, if fixed, would have left the users with much more satisfying experience.

6-Point Analysis

POINT 4/6 SOCIAL DESIGN

As mentioned before, collaborative consumption can't function if amount of idling capacities created by users do not meet critical mass. But that is not the whole story. To keep the service running in a long run, it is crucial maintain that number (and hopefully grow it.) Otherwise, if amount of users drop below that of the critical mass, suddenly everyone will stop using that service because there will not be enough supplies and demands to keep everyone satisfied. For example, a book store will cease to function if one of the following circumstances happens:

1. There are not enough books in the store > customers visiting the book store feel underwhelmed and went to other book store for more choices;
2. The bookstore has abundance of books but not enough customers to keep the business running.

What is different is that, in most collaborative consumption services, users act both as suppliers (books) and as customers. If there are not enough classified posts by users in Craigslist, then other users will start looking for other similar services elsewhere. For example, Craigslist in Helsinki has much less active users than Netcyclers<sup>53</sup>—which is more successful with more things users can look for. Users create strong community, and strong community

53. Netcyclers is an online service for consumers that facilitates swapping, giving away and trading pre-owned goods between users. The service is not only for direct person-to-person swaps, but also enables trade rings of up to five persons. Trade rings are supported using in-house developed technology. The company is based in Helsinki, Finland and the service is currently available in Finland, the UK and Germany. Netcyclers has more than 120 000 registered users.

54. Porter (2008)  
55. Ibid.

will attract more users. But it is also true vice versa. If users start leaving and making the community weaker, more users will leave, turning the community even weaker.

Yet, strong communities do not simply happen out of thin air. It requires good planning and excellent social designs integrated into the services. In the book ‘Designing for the Social Web’ by Joshua Porter, he defines social design as “the conception, planning, and production of websites and applications that support social interaction”<sup>54</sup>, as he also believes that social design is the future of the web, as human are innately social. He said, “We exhibit social behavior. If we did not, if we weren’t social from the day we are born. Then social software would be incongruous: it just wouldn’t make sense. Instead of garnering our attention and energy, Amazon, eBay, and MySpace would be worthless.” But the truth is just the opposite. It is the social designs and features that thrive these services, and there are fewer and fewer websites or online applications nowadays that can live without them.

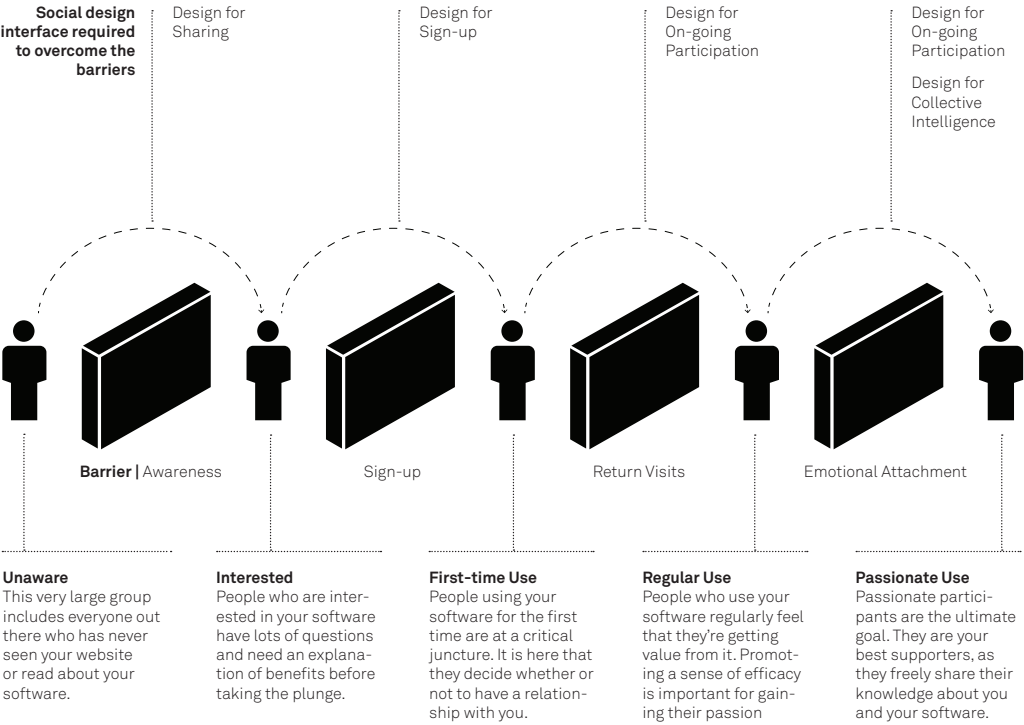
There are 5 steps (and 4 barriers), according to Porter, that a social website would want as many users and as further to go through these steps as possible in order to create a strong community. Each step requires good social design interfaces for users to interact with effortlessly and efficiently<sup>55</sup> (image 3.)

In total, there are four crucial social design features that every web should implement, according to Porter:

1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UP

The first impression is very crucial to newcomers. There are literally seconds to capture their attentions and to answer the most important question: why should I bother using this website, application or software? A good sign-up design has to answer all the basics question: who (is it for), what (does it do), where (can I use it), when (can I use it), why (is it important to me) and how (does it work). Porter suggests that a good sign-up framework should contain the following:

- An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service
- Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works
- Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software
- In-depth feature tour or feature pages
- Video or screencast showing actual use
- Get people started using the software as early as possible
- Evidence of other people using your software successfully



and that a good sign-up design should reduce sign-up frictions by

- Not making creating an account a requirement (until necessary), users can start using the software right away.
- Asking only absolutely necessary information

2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Keeping people coming back after first use and sign-ups is an uphill task, possibly even more difficult than trying to get people to sign-up. The success key to this is the ability to capture user's motivation of using the software. Following is the list of motivations Porter has suggested:

- Identity: People use social websites to manage their identity within their social groups.
- Uniqueness: People use social websites because they feel that their contribution is unique and valuable
- Reciprocity: People participate because they either want to give back or because they expect others to give back to them
- Reputation: People participate to build their reputation and improve their relationships with others
- Sense of efficacy: People participate in order to do good work and

**Image 3 (above)** Diagram by Porter on how users travel from 'unaware' to become 'passionate.' Each step has certain barrier which social design can help user overcomes.

have a positive effect

- Control: People want control over how their information is shared and displayed
- Ownership: People participate because they feel a sense of ownership over their content online.

3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

In social websites, the most valuable thing is the user created contents. Think Wikipedia or IMDB, these two websites are practically well-known and function on these contents. Collective intelligence is based in the idea that by aggregating the behavior of many people, we can gain novel insights. And these collective intelligence is what keep users intact and keep coming for the services, for example, millions of people visit IMDB each day to check out a movie’s aggregated rating to how has the world rated it. There are three steps how these systems work:

- Initial Action: a content is submitted into the system.
- Display: the content is displayed for the other to see and act on.
- Feedback: the people using the system are given an opportunity to provide feedback on the content to assess its quality. To get a better picture, here is a few famous example:

4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

SERVICE	ACTION	DISPLAY	FEEDBACK
Amazon	Write a product review	Upcoming, popular, Homepage	Is this helpful? Report this, Comment
Wikipedia	Starting an article	Article page	Edit articles over time
Flickr	Uploading, tagging a picture	Interestingness, Popularity, Clusters	Tagging, Favorites

In his book ‘The Tipping Point’, Malcolm Gladwell describes a rare type of person he calls a ‘connector.’ Connectors are those who like to find and love to be the first to tell their friends about the next great things, be it products or services. They gain social capital as they do this. Their reputation grows. And the services become more and more known. As Gladwell suggested that these connectors share information like it’s a disease. And if that sharing reaches epidemic levels, with enough people sharing and joining the services, a critical mass is then reached.<sup>56</sup> Hence it is very important that these sharing features are well implemented. Here is a list Porter suggested would make

good sharing features:

- Content easily sharable: has permanent URL, embeddable, PDF, printer-friendly, etc.
- Heed the call to action: share features are at the right place and the right time, with appropriate sharing options available.
- Use of sharing form: the form people must fill out in order to specify with whom they wish to share, don’t ask for any information unnecessary. The sharing form makes the recipient feels that the message is more personal.
- Give people something to do after sharing: like signing up, subscribe, etc.
- Allow for multiple sharing.

To evaluate how each of the case studies does in implementing social designs, it will be checked if which and how each of these features is implemented. Showing here is a brief overview using check boxes–green means fully and well implemented, yellow means partially and red means that feature is not implemented or ignored. For full analysis with screenshots and explanation, please refer to Appendix C.

Social Design / Couchsurfing

1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UP

An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service

- ☒ Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works
- ☒ Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software
- ☒ In-depth feature tour or feature pages
- ☒ Video or screencast showing actual use
- ☒ Get people started using the software as early as possible
- ☒ Evidence of other people using your software successfully
- ☒ Not making creating an account a requirement
- ☒ Asking only absolutely necessary information
- ☒

2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

- ☒ Uniqueness
- ☒ Reciprocity
- ☒ Reputation
- ☒ Sense of efficacy
- ☒ Control
- ☒ Ownership



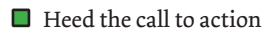


### 3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

#### 4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Invite a surfer / Couch request	Dashboard	Read profile, send message, ++contact list, print, read request, send invite, add friend, leave a reference
Discuss	Groups pages	Read posts, reply to posts, post a new message, create or manage polls, join/leave group, report
Activities	Activity pages	Read details, get directions, join, discuss, create an activity

Content easily sharable



Heed the call to action



Use of sharing form



Give people something to do after sharing



Allow for multiple sharing



#### CONCLUSION

However clumsy and unprofessional Couchsurfing's visual design, associations and usability may be, they are excellent when it comes to the social design aspects. And it is perhaps because of this fact, they stay today as the leader in hospitality exchange services. They simply understand that Couchsurfing, unlike other hospitality services, is not about room quality, prices or locations. It's all about the people. This is why creating strong communities and encouraging people to participate more and more through great social design implementation is Couchsurfing's number one priority.

They've scored all green in 'Design for Participation' category, with rich experiences and options available in 'Design for Collective Intelligence'. And 'Design for Sharing' is appropriately and understandably not promoted and perhaps even voluntarily ignored.

'Design for Sign-up', however, can be improved. While 3 introductory videos are well done, a touring page where it explains what it actually looks like inside Couchsurfing, how people get connected through the interfaces, and how vibrant the current community is, should be easily accessible and shown without having to signing-up. Since surfing and hosting is already

impossible without filling up lengthy personal information—understandably so as it concerns trusts and security issues—it does not hurt to let non-signups take a look inside the community before deciding.

#### Social Design / Kickstarter

#### 1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UP

An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service



Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works



Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software



In-depth feature tour or feature pages



Video or screencast showing actual use



Get people started using the software as early as possible



Evidence of other people using your software successfully



Not making creating an account a requirement



Asking only absolutely necessary information



#### 2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity



Uniqueness



Reciprocity



Reputation



Sense of efficacy



Control



Ownership



#### 3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

#### 4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Backing a project	Project page	Back the project, like (on Facebook), embed (as HTML), tweet (on Twitter), post a comment
Creating a project	Project page	Input of required informations: basics, rewards, story, about you, account and review. Preview the project, answer questions, post a comment

Content easily sharable



Heed the call to action



Use of sharing form

- Give people something to do after sharing
- Allow for multiple sharing
- 

#### CONCLUSION

Along with great usability, Kickstarter has done equally well in social designs, especially in 'Design for Ongoing Participation'. Signing up process can be much improved by allowing users to back projects without having to make an account, as they should be able to use Amazon Payment account to simply do so. More visual elements explaining how the whole system works can be useful, but due to its already great usability, it is not mandatory. Adding email sharing should be considered, as not everyone has a Facebook or Twitter account, and most people would have no idea how to put the HTML embedded tags into use.

Social Design / Skillshare

#### 1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UP

An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service

- Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works
- Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software
- In-depth feature tour or feature pages
- Video or screencast showing actual use
- Get people started using the software as early as possible
- Evidence of other people using your software successfully
- Not making creating an account a requirement
- Asking only absolutely necessary information
- 

#### 2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

- Uniqueness
- Reciprocity
- Reputation
- Sense of efficacy
- Control
- Ownership

#### 3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

#### 4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Learn	Classes page	View details, enroll, +watchlist, give endorsement to teacher, give testimonials to teacher, discuss, share
Teach	Class creation page	Input information on new class, schedule a class, edit, delete, create a syllabus, discuss, share

Content easily sharable

- Heed the call to action
- Use of sharing form
- Give people something to do after sharing
- Allow for multiple sharing
- 

#### CONCLUSION

Similar to Kickstarter, Skillshare does well in social design aspects, but can certainly be improved. Participating in a class should never require creating an account, even with inclined option to use Facebook, as some users may not feel comfortable linking the service with their personal social networks. A feature page allowing users to preview the class pages before publishing (as in Kickstarter) would be welcomed.

The classes community would be much more vibrant (and fun) if each classes are allowed to use more media and more flexibility to the layout, like in Kickstarter. Right now it is so rigid and may not be suitable for all classes. Ability to add videos, images or sounds would totally add appeal to many classes to the next level.

Like Kickstarter, emails are ignored as the choice to share, which is notable in my opinion. Emails, like letters, while may not attract as many viewers as in Facebook Wall for Twitter Tweets, it presents a much more personal approach to the recipients, hence higher likelihood for them to participate—be it funding a project in Kickstarter or participating a class in Skillshare. Simply adding such option would not hurt at all.

Social Design / Craigslist

#### 1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UP

An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service

- Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works
- Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software

- In-depth feature tour or feature pages
- Video or screencast showing actual use
- Get people started using the software as early as possible
- Evidence of other people using your software successfully
- Not making creating an account a requirement
- Asking only absolutely necessary information
- 

## 2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

### Identity

- Uniqueness
- Reciprocity
- Reputation
- Sense of efficacy
- Control
- Ownership
- 

## 3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

## 4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Post a classified	Classified page	Owner: Edit, delete Others: Read, reply, flag
Compose new thread	Discussion forum	Read, reply, rate, flag
<p>Content easily sharable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Heed the call to action</li> <li>■ Use of sharing form</li> <li>■ Give people something to do after sharing</li> <li>■ Allow for multiple sharing</li> <li>■</li> </ul> <p>CONCLUSION</p> <p>It is obvious that there are limitations within Craigslist social design features, but where it really matters, I think they have done alright. What they does is to keep very low threshold to enter: by not using fancy language for the copy; not asking users to sign up for the main features (viewing and posting classifieds); 'how-to' steps are clearly and simply explained; new users will feel absolutely welcomed to just dive in and tryout the service immediately.</p> <p>To keep users engaged, the discussion forum does a decent job for it with adequate emphasis on individual's posts and threads. The profile page</p>		

is also well done for its purpose, but with today's standards, options linking it to other widely used social networks like Facebook or Twitter would be welcomed.

All the user's generated contents (classifieds and forums) are well organized into categories and both searchable and browsable. Flagging feature is vital to keep the community clean from abusive use, which might jeopardize community's strength.

The sharing options though, seem to be completely ignored by Craigslist. This may be due to the fact that they are not in the need for new users joining the community (as it is very active as in many parts of the world it is), or that they simply see a unique URL adequate enough, and users can use it to share in whichever means they see fit.

All in all, I think while these features are limited and may be sub-par compared to other collaborative consumption services of today's standards, it does fit well with the extreme simplicity, usability and democratic approach the site set out to be.

## Social Design / Autolib'

## 1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UP

An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service

- Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works
- Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software
- In-depth feature tour or feature pages
- Video or screencast showing actual use
- Get people started using the software as early as possible
- Evidence of other people using your software successfully
- Not making creating an account a requirement
- Asking only absolutely necessary information
- 

## 2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

### Identity

- Uniqueness
- Reciprocity
- Reputation
- Sense of efficacy
- Control
- Ownership
- 3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Cars and stations	<div>Stations map page</div> <div>Content easily sharable</div> <div><div>■</div> Heed the call to action</div> <div><div>■</div> Use of sharing form</div> <div><div>■</div> Give people something to do after sharing</div> <div><div>■</div> Allow for multiple sharing</div> <div><div>■</div></div>	<div>Locate a station/cars or subscription kiosks,</div> <div>Book a vehicle, book a parking space,</div>

CONCLUSION

In contrast to Couchsurfing, while Autolib’ have done very good job in brand’s visual identity, associations and usability, they really fall short in social design aspect. While it is understandable that since it is a B2C (Business to Consumer) model, there is not much need for users to aggregate in creating any content for having many-to-many conversations (Autolib’ only has limited one-to-many conversation from the corporate to individual users), other aspects like ‘Design for Sign-up’ or ‘Design for Sharing’ can be much improved.

The landing page sorely lacks a good appealing caption to explain in seconds what this service is all about and to attract new users. Testimonials sections look weak (and sorrily unauthentic) and signing-up process can be much better designed to feel less burdensome.

It is very clear that the more users join into Autlob’ community, the more profitable they will become as the cost to produce the cars and stations together with its maintenance is very much fixed. Considering that, it is very crucial for users who are constantly using the service to be able to easily share their experience and saying good things about them in order to expand their customers’ base. Better ‘Design for Sharing’ features can certainly improve those aspects.

6-Point Analysis  
POINT 5/6 QUALITY (SWOT)

To judge overall collaborative consumption’s design quality, all of the previous visual elements—visual identity, associations, usability and social design—are assessed using SWOT analysis. SWOT analysis (also known as SWOT Matrix) is a structured planning method used to evaluate the Strengths,

Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in a business venture. Afterwards, each case studies will be analyzed in overall quality side by side with one of the closest rival in the market, to judge its overall superiority.

Quality / Couchsurfing

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strength:

- Very well implemented social design features.
- High accessibility.
- Communicative and persuasive videos.

Weakness:

- Unprofessional visual identity and photographic images.
- Very inconsistent in many regards.
- Poor usability-both layout and UI.

Threat:

- Have to keep the spirit of non-profits as not to start charging users for member fees, otherwise they will break their vision promises with users.

Opportunity:

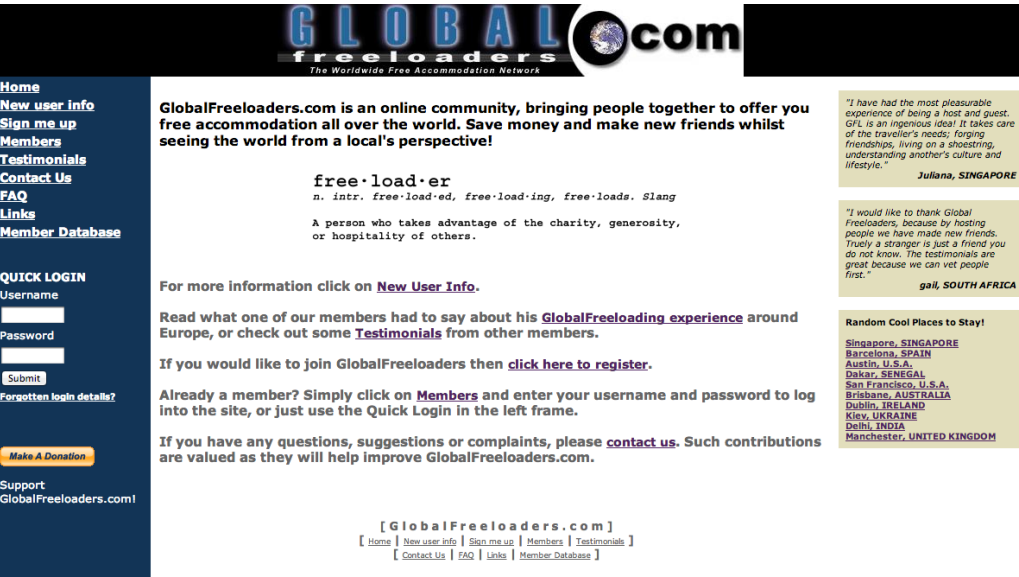
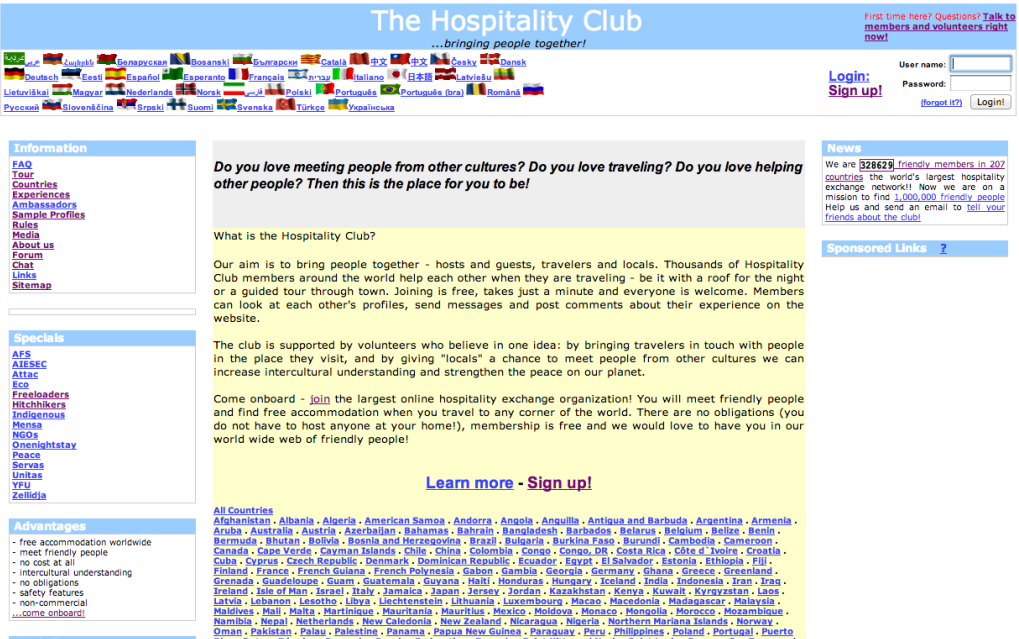
- Visual identity redesign and usability improvements will greatly appeal to more users.
- Photographic usage can be crowd-source to members, as the images will prove very authentic and will adds to brand's interaction with its members.

COUCHSURFING VS. HOSPITALITY CLUB / GLOBAL FREELoadERS

(screenshots on opposite page)

While it may be true that Couchsurfing's visual aspects does not possess the highest quality or credibility, especially when compared against other for-profit collaborative consumption services. But when compared with other non-profit hospitality services, it is very obvious that they are doing a much better job. Hospitality Club and Global Freeloaders are their closest competitor. Compared to Couchsurfing, there is a huge gap in overall quality, credibility and sense of professionalism, especially in visual identity design and image associations, which is almost non existent in both of the competitors. From usability standpoint, however, with the use of almost only text-based system, the two competitors offer more consistency and technological accessibility.

Quality / Kickstarter





SWOT ANALYSIS

Strength:

- Simple, neutral and consistent use of visual identity and photographic images.
- High usability performance, especially how information is controlled and displayed.
- Strong professional feeling through high consistency.

Weakness:

- Uncharacteristic visual identity.
- Unclear and (possibly) unequal on how projects are displayed and promoted, which contradicts with its promotion in equality through associations.

Threat:

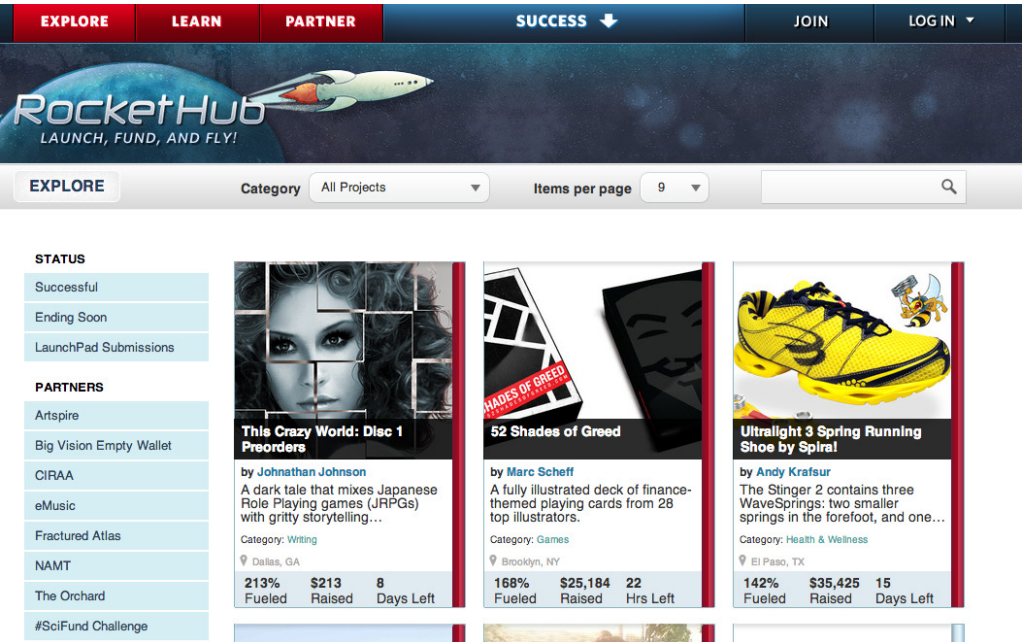
- Limitations to only creative projects.
- Service limited to very few countries.
- Tied with Amazon Payment may repel some users.

Opportunity:

- Kickstarter can bring out offsprig services to operate in other areas.

KICKSTARTER VS. ROCKET HUB (screenshots on opposite page)

Being also a creative projects crowd-funding, Rocket Hub offers much more flexibility in terms of projects that can be funded (e.g., it can be as little as funding to buy a digital tablet), with less money deducted from the project's creator (4% against Kickstarter's 5%.) While I was critical on how too banal and uncharacteristic Kickstarter visual identity is, Rocket Hub just represents the exact opposite. For example, it utilizes 4 typefaces on the website, a lot of animations in the layout and the logo contains so many complex elements. Usability is also fuzzy, with too many things being presented in one page and visual hierarchy is not obvious and the main navigation does not represent the most important information or links. It is clear that Kickstarter's approach possess much higher credibility and quality, as reflected in massive fund of 316 millions U.S. Dollar raised through them.<sup>57</sup>



## SWOT ANALYSIS

### Strength:

- Extremely low threshold to start using the service.
- Low learning curve how the website works.
- Adamance in using only text-based elements in visual identity creates uniqueness.

### Weakness:

- Omission to any graphical elements and photographic images use can makes it difficult to create visual hierarchy and some users may find it too old-fashioned and boring.
- Discussion area's usability can be improved.

### Threat:

- There are many growing services out there that can do exactly the same thing.

### Opportunity:

- Keep the same easy-to-use, text based approach, but redesigns that adds visual appeal and better hierarchy.
- Expansion to other mediums like for mobile devices.

## CRAIGSLIST VS. EBAY CLASSIFIED (screenshots on opposite page)

While there are many classified services similar to Craigslist out there, eBay Classified is regarded one of the most competitive. With its already strong eBay brand, the colorful and simple visual identity is well transported to its offspring. The ease of use and simplicity is very much on par with Craigslist, but with inclusion of minor graphic usage and stricter layouts, eBay Classified is easier to navigate and provides better visual hierarchy. However, Cragislist is more accessible with multi-language supports together with worldwide local websites. Less control on the visual identity, more messy layout, together with discussion features certainly creates a more relaxed and open community feelings, an aspect in which other competitors will find difficult to match.

The top screenshot shows the eBay Classified homepage for the San Francisco Bay Area. It features a navigation bar with the eBay Classified logo, a search bar, and links for Register, Sign in, Manage my ads, Help, and Create your FREE Ad. Below the navigation bar, there's a 'For sale' section with a grid of category tiles: Antiques, Appliances, Arts & crafts, Baby & kid stuff, Bicycles, Books & magazines, Business & Industrial, Cell phones, Clothing & accessories, Collectibles, Computers & tech, Electronics, Farm equipment, Furniture, Health & beauty, Home decor, Jewelry & watches, Movies & music, Musical instruments, Outdoor & garden, Photo & video, Sporting goods, Tickets, Tools, Toys & games, Video gaming, and Everything else. To the right of these tiles is a promotional banner for 'Sell the old one and upgrade' featuring a bicycle and a 'Get rollin'' button.

The bottom screenshot shows a search results page for 'Cell phones' in the San Francisco Bay Area. It displays a list of items for sale with their prices and locations. The items include: 'apple iphone 3, 3gs, 4, 4s charger' for \$10 in San Ramon, 'iphone 4' for \$260 in San Francisco, 'HTC Inspire 4G/ Desire HD Rubber TPU Skin Case/' for \$7 in San Jose, and 'Universal Phone Case' for \$5 in Hayward. The page also includes a sidebar with filters for Price and Categories, and a 'View as' dropdown menu.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

### Strength:

- Strong and unique visual identity.
- Stand alone in the market as of today.

### Weakness:

- Inconsistency in still and moving photographic images executions.
- Mediocre usability, especially in navigation and how choices are illogically promoted.
- Users have little freedom in expressing and promoting their classes.

### Threat:

- If new players come into the market and can exceed Skillshare in their weaknesses, they may start losing users to the others.
- Limited local classes only in some countries and only supports English may be a stumbling block for the community to grow.

### Opportunity:

- Create micro websites or accessibility implementation that support other countries/languages.
- Cooperate with established educational institutions may open up new market.
- Create a platform for constructive discussion regarding education.

## SKILLSHARE VS. LYND.COM (screenshots on opposite page)

Since Skillshare does not have direct competitors yet, I've chosen one of the most popular online for-profit software classes, lynda.com to compare with. For visual identity design, Skillshare easily quell with a more vibrant and fresher approach, while lynda.com's pretty much sticks to a traditional and uncharacteristic identity design. However, when it comes to associations, lynda.com's videos and use of photographic images simply show how much more professional they with very high quality productions. Usability wise, they both are at flawed. While Skillshare lacks logic and consistency in UI and layout, lynda.com is also clumsy when it comes to visual hierarchy, clustering the pages with too much information for users to comprehend at the same time, making the whole layout looks cheap, confusing as if there are advertisements all over the website.

Quality / Autolib'

software	skill level	author	release date
Java (3)	Beginner (12)	Kevin Skoglund (7)	2012 (8)
JavaScript (3)	Intermediate (9)	Bill Weinman (3)	2011 (4)
PHP (3)	Advanced (1)	Chris Converse (2)	2010 (3)
Ruby on Rails (3)		David Gassner (2)	2009 (3)

Course Title	Level	Duration	Released
Java Advanced Training	Advanced	03h 32m	09/2012
Object-Oriented Programming with PHP	Intermediate	01h 48m	09/2012
Interactive Data Visualization with Processing	Beginner	07h 43m	09/2012
Create a Tooltip with jQuery	Intermediate	54m 23s	08/2012
Create a Tooltip with jQuery and Dreamweaver	Intermediate	54m 15s	08/2012
C/C++ Essential Training	Beginner	10h 55m	06/2012



## SWOT ANALYSIS

### Strength:

- Fresh and vibrant visual identity, especially with use of illustrations.
- Very professional use of still and moving photographic images.
- Good usability.

### Weakness:

- Visual identity is too complex with too many elements.
- Illogical UI especially in typography and colors.
- Poor support of social design features.

### Threat:

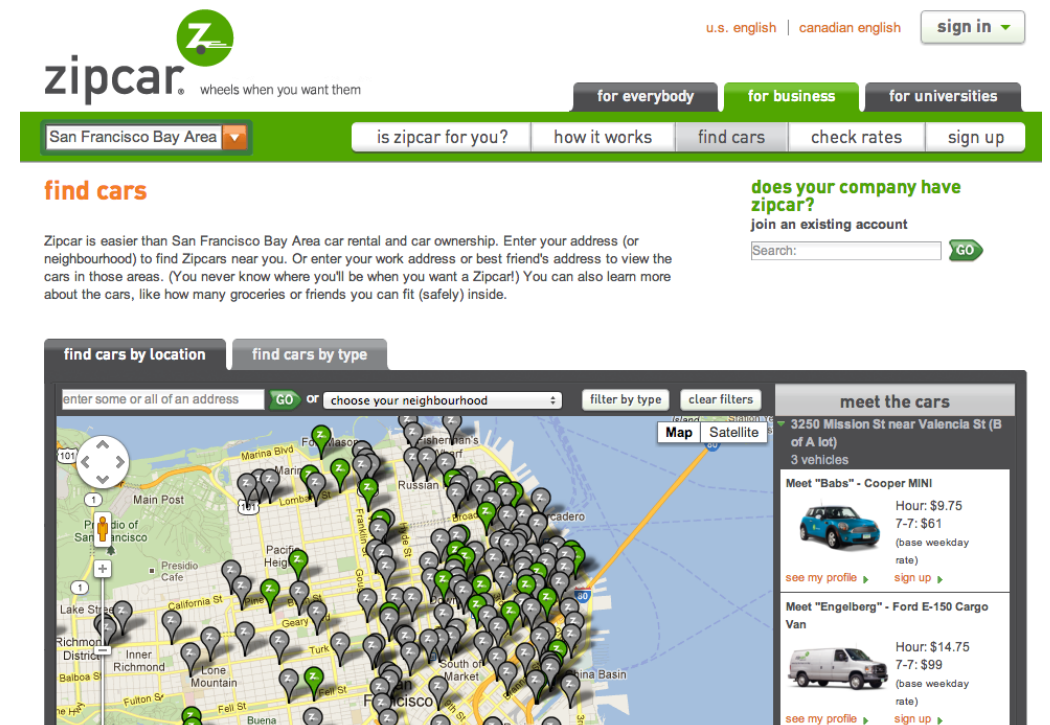
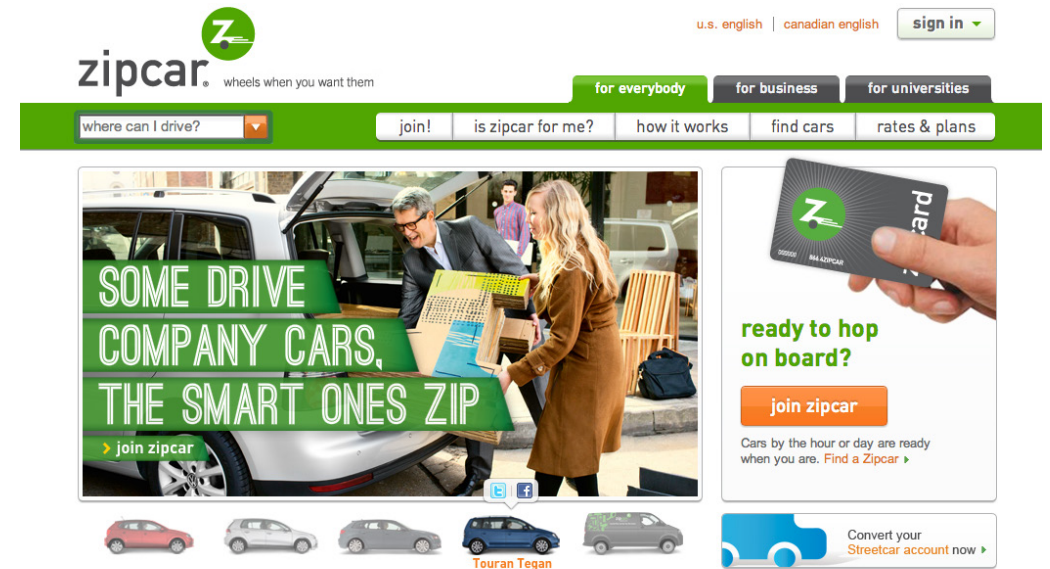
- If big players like Zipcar enter the France market, Autolib' may face some very serious competitors.
- Community may not grow as fast as expected due to poor social design features.

### Opportunity:

- Autolib' can learn how to create strong community between users and improve corporation communication through Zipcar.
- Expand the service to other parts of France and perhaps countries nearby.

## AUTOLIB' VS. ZIPCAR (screenshots on opposite page)

Zipcar is by far the most successful car sharing service in the world with operations in four countries: U.S., Canada, U.K. and Spain. Zipcar's visual identity is banal and corporate-like. In comparison, Autolib' looks like a teenager while Zipcar looks like a businessman. In that sense, Autolib' visual identity is much more appropriate as they both try to aim for the vibrant urban residents. Zipcar's associations though, make up for its identity dullness by using much livelier photographic images, but compared with Autolib' simple and universally accessible illustrations, it is still proved less effective and less communicative. Autolib' promotional and instructive videos are very appealing, something Zipcar does not have. Usability-wise, Zipcar beats Autolib' easily with its extremely easy-to-use and clean layout, very consistent and logical UI, clear use of language, and on top of that, a how-to video showing holistic view of the service—something Autolib' does not have.





58. Neumeier (2005, p. 2)

User experience is the ultimate judgement users feel towards any certain brand after having interacted with it. What the brands want themselves to be perceived have nothing to do with what the users actually see them, this is why it is one aspect that can not simply be controlled or designed. It is purely emotional, as brand guru Marty Neumeier explains that, at the end of the day, “a brand is a person’s gut feeling about a product, service, or organization.”<sup>58</sup>

I have assigned each case studies a set of 10 adjectives which are my personal reflections after having gone through very detailed analysis. All these adjectives were mentioned during each of the case’s analysis, so while it may contain some subjectivities, they are very much unbiased.

User Experience / Couchsurfing			
Open-minded	Amicable	Inspiring	Explorative
Refreshing	Untidy	Community	Friendship
Connection	Travelling		
User Experience / Kickstarter			
Open-minded	Neutral	Professional	Creative
Success	Community	Simple	Diverse
Undemocratic	Inclusive		
User Experience / Craigslist			
Familiar	Amicable	Free	Liberal
Outdated	Boring	Community	Structured
Exchange	Local		
User Experience / Skillshare			
Connection	Learning	Professional	Vibrant
Young&Fresh	Innovative	Reliable	Stimulus
Corporate	Intimidated		
User Experience / Autolib'			
Clean	Urban	Fresh	Young
Lively	Accessible	Fun	Authoritative
Relaxed	Convenient		

# chapter three hands-on experience

While analysis of existing services can definitely provide invaluable knowledge, it is with the actual lessons from real working experience that those knowledge can be put in to practical use to gain insightful understandings. In this chapter, two collaborative consumption projects—CAKE THEORY and CALOOM—are discussed, with emphasis on the hands-on design process. Cake Theory is a crowd-funding platform, commissioned by a clients based in Thailand and the U.S. in which I was employed as the sole designer/consultant to come up with both conception and execution. Caloom is a project initiated by Jeroen Carlese, a Dutch designer/entrepreneur who is also a part-time lecturer at the Media Lab, Aalto ARTS. Finnish software engineer Kalle Launiala later joined the team as a partner. For Caloom, I was involved as a user interface (UI) designer.

The aim of this chapter is to exhibit the design process behind both projects, then gather lessons I learned from understandings and mistakes from the design process experience from both projects.

## CAKE THEORY



Cake theory is a crowd-funding service. It is a meeting place where future entrepreneurs and future customers meet, to purchase pieces of funding – a cake – for future goods/services.

‘Cake’ is used as a metaphor for the full funding needed by entrepreneurs to fulfill their projects, hence the name Cake Theory. A cake is sliced into any number of pieces, packaged and sold however the entrepreneurs want. The more pieces of cake a package contains, the more expensive it becomes, with better goods/services returns. Cake Theory can also be used as a marketing tool to validate business ideas. If there are enough customers willing to pay for particular goods/services, it means that the project has hit the right spot in its target group’s minds.

The service is geared towards committed small to medium sized businesses. Entrepreneurs who are fully committed to the project and have almost-ready

business but lack partial funding, or those with established business wishing to expand operations and/or launch new goods or services. Investors can be entrepreneurs' close connections who are willing to fund their future business or any individuals who are interested in cutting-edge, unique and almost-ready-to-go future goods/services.

Range of interested industry including, but not limited to: bakeries, bars, restaurants, beauty salons, hospitality industry, organic farmers, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) could easily integrate this service to theirs, cafe, coffee shop, manufactures, IT sectors, cooking and food industry, furniture, handyman, veterinarian, automobile and cars, pet shops, renewable energy sector, travel agents, retailers, forestry, product designs, home and garden and outdoors products, service industry and so forth.

**The way Cake Theory works**

FOR ENTREPRENEURS TO RAISE MONEY	FOR INVESTORS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Sign up</li><li>– Fill in project details</li><li>– Wait for the project to be evaluated and approved from Cake Theory (up to 3 working days)</li><li>– The project is approved, the project page is automatically generated by Cake Theory (if not approved, the entrepreneur will be sent an email with explanations, then can re-submit)</li><li>– Share the links through social networks.</li><li>– Edit, update and communicate within your project page</li><li>– The project is completed once the whole cake is sold (It is get-what-you-raised approach).</li><li>– Cake Theory keeps 4% of the cake's value, the entrepreneur receive the rest of the fund raised.</li><li>– Run the business, rewards the investors back.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Hear about the fund-raising project (via close-connections, social networks, emails, visiting the website, etc.)</li><li>– Take a look at the project, what is offered for how much (how many pieces of cakes)</li><li>– Can instantly fund the project by purchasing any amount of cakes without having to sign in.</li><li>– Share the links through social networks.</li><li>– If the funded project is successful, wait to receive the awards. If not, receive full investment funds back.</li></ul>

Cake Theory has many appealing characteristics, and the potential is huge. It is completely free to start a project like every other crowd-funding platform, but the small percentage deducted to Cake Theory (only 4%) is better rate than its competitors. It generate risk-free fund-gathering methods. It is about buying future goods/services. The entrepreneurs only return the goods/services they promise once the whole cake is sold (the whole investment needed

received), otherwise there is no money transaction. It also eliminates the need for the business to be financially judged whether to obtain funding from traditional loan institutions (e.g., banks) and frustrations from bureaucratic process.

**INCUBATION OF THE CONCEPT**

It all began with frustrations. My client's first contact with crowd-funding platform was with the famous Kickstarter. His project proposal was rejected by Kickstarter on the basis that it did not fit in the 'creative' criteria. Frustrated, he set out to make his own crowd-funding platform that would be more open and allow all kind of projects to be funded, be it large or small. It could even be personal projects like funding somebody to make a trip somewhere.

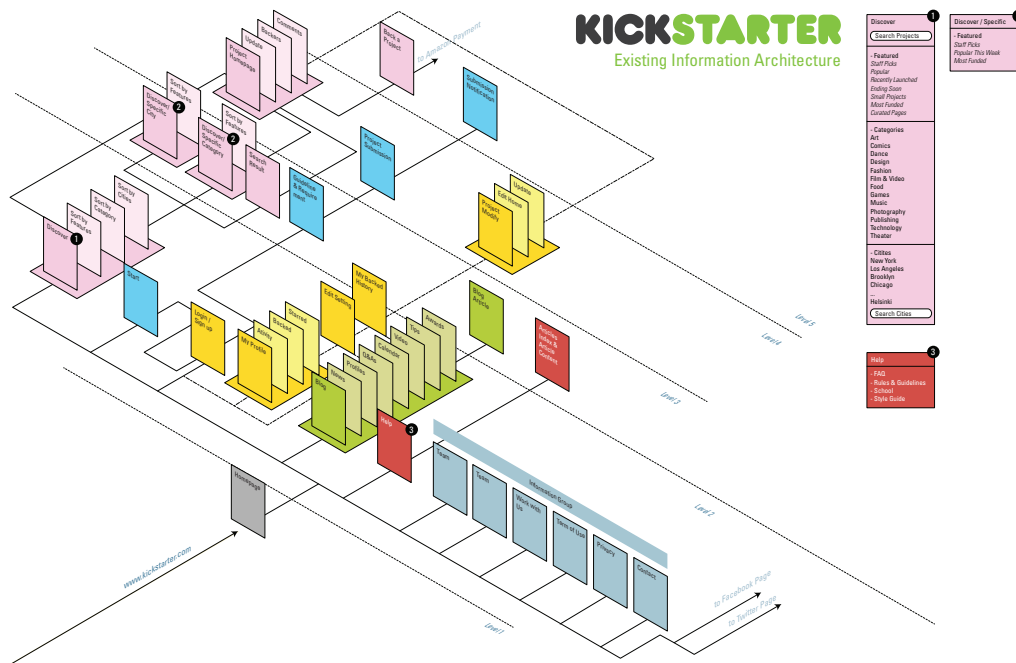
He had then hired a web developer team to come up with the design of the web, using the title 'Fundbucket' at the time. But then second frustration came. The web didn't turn out as good as he had imagined, or that the developer had promised. And it was getting costly. Incidentally by that time, his friend had introduced him to me, asking for advice with possible collaboration opportunity.

We met, and through various conversations, it was becoming more and more clear that Fundbucket idea might not be feasible, especially with already big players out there doing same thing like Indiegogo (a crowd-funding solution that empowers ideas and enables people to donate funds easily, accepts all kinds of projects, [www.indiegogo.com](http://www.indiegogo.com)) So we started all over.

After rounds of discussions, my client proposed the idea of a platform where it only accept serious business proposal. He compared it to Dragon's Den (a reality television program featuring entrepreneurs pitching their business ideas in order to secure investment finance from a panel of venture capitalists), but instead of judges, the crowd of the world will decide if the idea is good enough they want to buy it now to be able to use it in the future. I liked the idea, but still thought it was not strong enough to distinguish ourselves from other competitors.

Then I came up with the slicing cake idea, and that was it. Everything clicked: entrepreneurs are selling 'pieces of a cake', the future goods and services in order to realize their projects. I suggested the name 'Cake Theory' and the client loved it.

*Competitor Analysis.* To avoid reinventing the wheels, it was worth spending effort on studying an existing crowd-funding services. I chose Kickstarter, as they are the most well-known and successful. I've studied their information architecture and overall usability (this was done prior to the full 6-pont analysis in *Chapter 2.*)



### Kickstarter Information Architecture Analysis

POSITIVES	NEGATIVES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The navigation is clear and simple enough, I can get to where I want to go and always know where I am orientated in the website. I didn't once find myself in the dark corner where I have to hit 'back.'</li> <li>– Pages are given different hierarchy by choice of sizes, placement and colors.</li> <li>– Use of color gives consistency and indicates hierarchy of what information is more important.</li> <li>– Clean layout</li> <li>– Clear typography</li> <li>– I especially like the 'Help' article page where index is on the left and content on the right without having to refresh all the time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Too many pages can be accessed from the homepage, could create information flooding, especially the static information page.</li> <li>– In 'discover' section, there are too many layers in trying to find the project user might be interested.</li> <li>– The feeling of undemocratic system in displaying the projects, such as 'staff pick' or 'curated', and there's a feeling that it's not showing every project. Once in specific 'category', there are three sub categories: staff picks, popular this week, most funded: what if a project didn't fit in any of this category, is it simply forgotten?</li> <li>– Some pages contain same information ('My backer history' and 'Backed projects', can be merged. successful, wait to receive the awards. If not, receive full investment funds back.</li> </ul>

From the analysis, here are some aspects Cake Theory can improve upon:

- Reduce information clutters. Group as many pages into one as possible. Eliminate pages that may contain same information.
- Discovering project should be very simple and democratic. A single page is enough.
- Introduce a new way to discover project according to user's needs.

*Information Architecture.* According to Paul Kahn, ex-visiting lecturer at Media Lab, Aalto ARTS and Kahn+Associates founder, information architecture can be:

- discovering the kinds of information the site contains
- matching this information to the needs of the users
- determining the appropriate metadata structure'

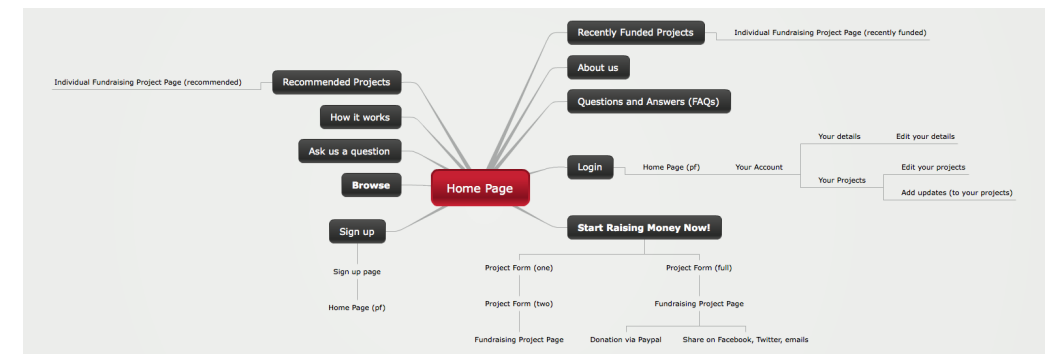
Before we came up with the slicing cake idea, there were several structures proposed for Fundbucket (image 1.) After the cake idea was developed and agreed, I came up with the final version of the structure (image 2.) Next step is the wireframes.

A website wireframe, also known as a page schematic or screen blueprint, is a visual guide that represents the skeletal framework of a website. It's also a great tool for communicating between designers, programmers and clients. By showing the wireframe, the whole team only focused on the site's functionalities and its navigation, rather than the aesthetics or layout. Programmers can already see the wireframe and determine if there would arise any technical difficulties. Clients can look and see if it includes all the content and functions they require.

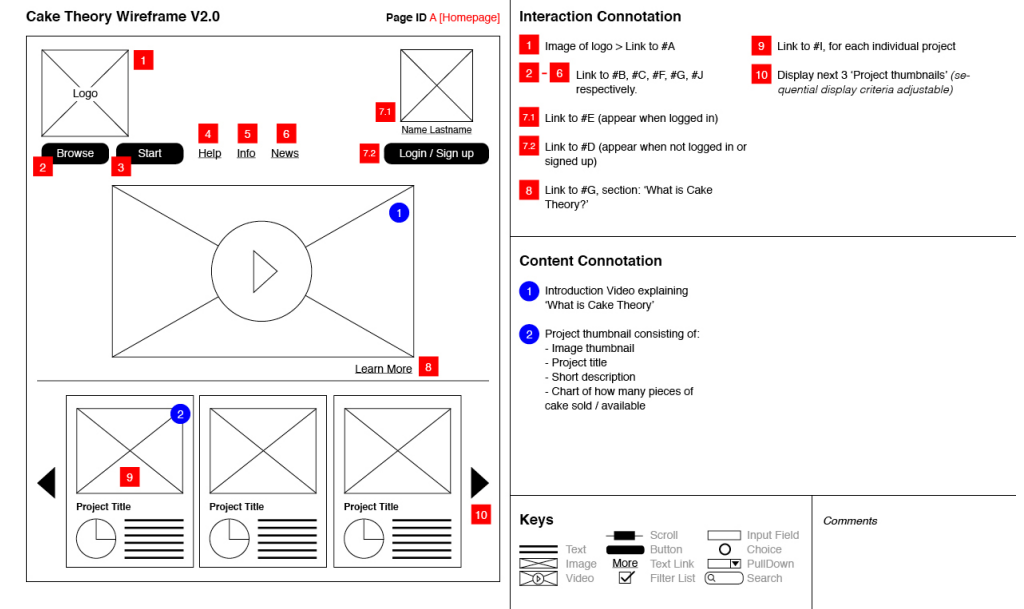
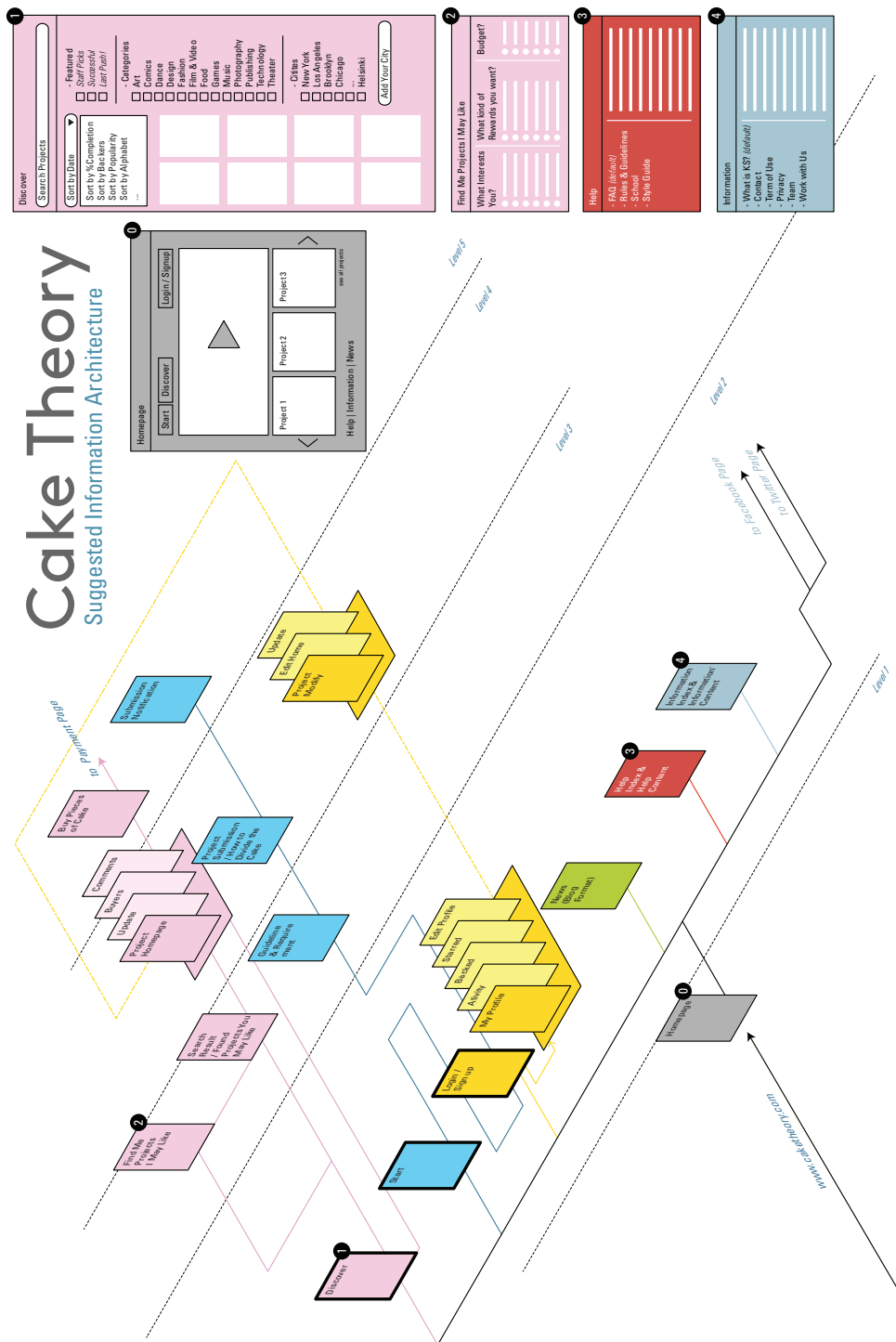
Generally, wireframes display what elements are be seen on certain pages, which do not necessarily represent the final layouts. Here are some wireframe examples I made for Cake Theory following the consensus on the information architecture (image 3.)

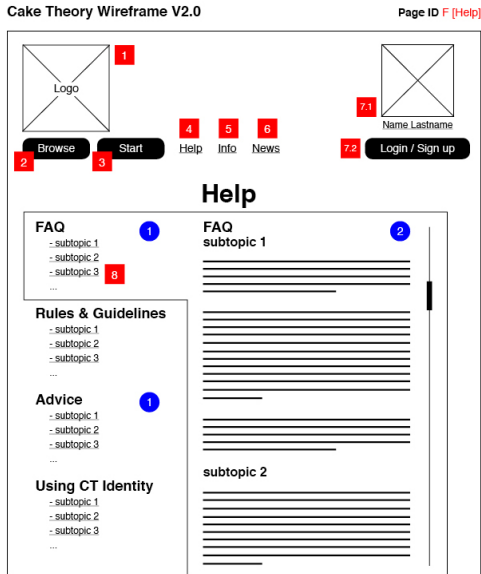
1. Kahn (2011)

Image 1 Original Fundbucket site structure.









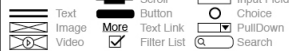
#### Interaction Connotation

- Image of logo > Link to #A
- Link to #B, #C, #F, #G, #J respectively.
- Link to #E (appear when logged in)
- Link to #D (appear when not logged in or signed up)
- When clicked on a sub-topic, area in scrolls down to the desired sub-topic without refreshing the page.

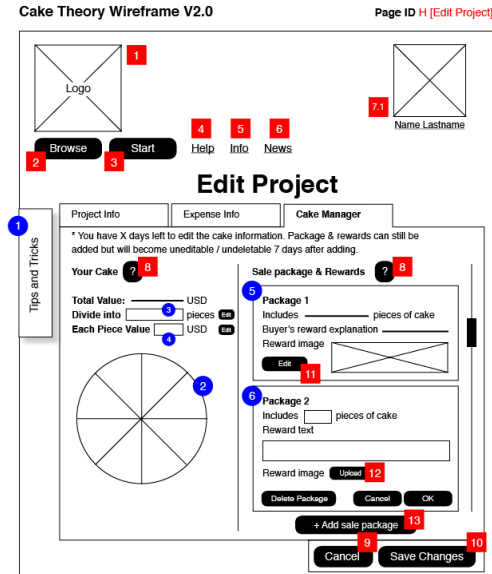
#### Content Connotation

- Topics and subtopics of interests. When clicking on the topic (or subtopic) outside the one that is currently selected, the page refreshes and loads new set of information. 'FAQ' is the default.
- Displaying the content of the selected topic. All the subtopics are shown, and can be scrolled all the way down without moving the area in

#### Keys



#### Comments



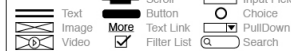
#### Interaction Connotation

- Image of logo > Link to #A
- Link to #B, #C, #F, #G, #J respectively.
- Link to #E (appear when logged in)
- Brings up pop-up dialogue briefly explain each topic with 'Read more' link [Link to #F]
- Edit the content of existing package, edit dialogue is
- Cancel all the changes made and refresh the page.
- Confirm all the changes made, and save into registry. (Note that all the amount of expense must be explained, otherwise there will be a warning message)
- Brings up upload dialogue. By uploading confirms the user's right to use the image.
- Add more 'Sale Package' box (5 is maximum)

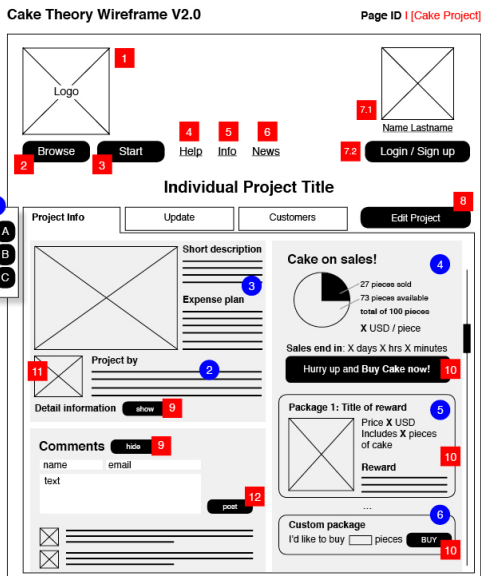
#### Content Connotation

- Pull-outs with information about how to write successful projects. When 'read more' link to #F for further tips and other things.
- Representation how cake is divided
- Numbers of pieces the cake have, changes in connection with
- The value of each piece of cake, changes in connection with
- Information of each 'Sale package' consisting of how many pieces of cake, what kind of rewards the buyer will get (in text and image)
- Editing dialogue for 'Sale Package' when clicked on

#### Keys



#### Comments



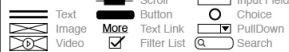
#### Interaction Connotation

- Image of logo > Link to #A
- Link to #B, #C, #F, #G, #J respectively.
- Link to #E (appear when logged in)
- Link to #D (appear when not logged in or signed up)
- Link to #H (only appear if this is user's own cake project.)
- Display information on demand
- Link to payment page #K
- Link to the cake's owner profile #E
- Post the comment (the whole comment dialogue post might not be available, depending on owner's setting on comments in #H)

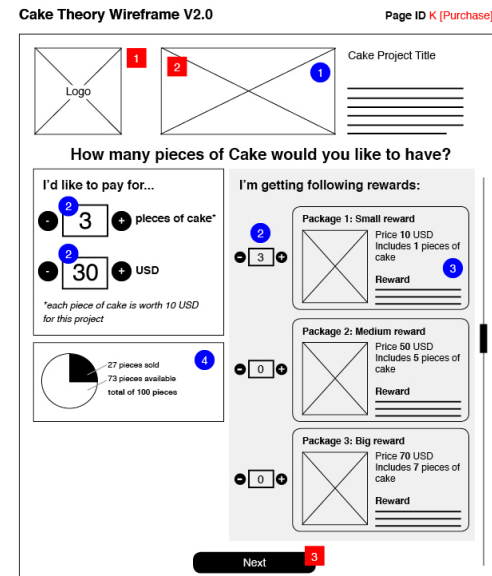
#### Content Connotation

- Share panel. This follows the user when scrolling. 3 buttons: A = 'Like' (If clicked will activate both FB and CT like) B = Tweet I C = Share [via Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn or Email]
- Basic information of the user, same as in #E far left column.
- Project and Expense information, loaded from data in #H
- Information area regarding sales of the cake.
- 'Sale Package' information, there can be as many as 5 packages shown.
- At the bottom of the last package, there's an option to customize any number of pieces of cake user wishes.

#### Keys



#### Comments



#### Interaction Connotation

- Image of logo > Link to #A
- Back to #I of that project
- Link to #K.1

#### Content Connotation

- Project image and its short description (as a reminder that the user is funding the right project...)
- All the amounts here are inter connected. - case1: by adjusting pieces of cake bought, the amount of USD automatically updates. The reward package is assigned to the biggest one first [for example: buying 5 pieces of cake will result in getting 1 'Medium reward' instead of 5 'Small reward', but user can change this by deleting the 'Medium reward' and add '5' to 'Small reward']
- 'Sale package' information. There can be up to 5 packages.
- When adjusting the amounts also automatically updates in real time.

#### Keys



#### Comments

## VISUAL IDENTITY

As the site skeleton structures came to completion, it was the time to give Cake Theory a face – a visual identity. My client and I were working on this together. First, we created a brand personality by asking ourselves one question: If Cake Theory is a person, what would he be like? How does he look? What does he wear? How would he talk? and so on. This is to be a starting point for me to translate this personality into visual elements. Following is our 'Cake man' personality in details:

*Cakeman is a young 35 - 40 years old male. He is well spirited, good hearted. He has a sense of fun, bright, adventurous, energetic, outgoing charisma with a hint of steadiness, dependable of sort. He is someone you can turn to for fun, always good having him around but at the same time dependable. You can talk business with him. If you are in need of someone to discuss serious matters, he is the guy you talk to.*

*We don't see him as a Loan Officer. I see him as a successful, smart financial executive, who either handles investments for the super wealthy individuals or routinely negotiates deals and makes important decisions. He is someone who can influence people, change their minds. He spends a bulk of his working time outside the office in meetings with clients such as Coca-cola, internet startup companies, Movie studios, celebrities, Goldman Sach, Apple, Google, Toyota, IKEA, oil contractors, farmers. He works with such a wide range of clients that he is capable of meeting both a young crowd or get serious with older groups/managers. He is sharp, knowledgeable, playful and approachable. He can sit nicely in any tables without showing any awkwardness. When he speaks, people listen. Clean and neat.*

*Privately, he is single, he chooses to be single and doesn't want to settle down yet. He is extremely charming and very popular with the ladies. He loves meeting new people. He surfs in Hawaii, Maldieves. He gets bored easily, he hates routine things and always want to be unique and different. A class of his own.*

From the description, 6 keywords can be extracted: Witty, Clean with a twist, Fun, Charismatic, Influential and Reliable.

We even choose some human, well-known individuals to further help with visual imagination (image 4-7.)

After plenty of thoughts to play around with, I started sketching out the first and most important visual element of any brand: the logo. The



**Image 4 (left)** Sean Parker  
(American entrepreneur, Napster founder, Spotify board of director)



**Image 5 (above left)** Jude Law  
(British actor, film producer and director)

**Image 6 (above)** Cillian Murphy  
(Irish film and theater actor)



**Image 7 (left)** Chaiwat Anutrakulchai  
(Thai host, DJ and actor)



idea of slicing the dividing has always been the main idea I want to communicate and work around, as it is the fundamental idea distinguishing Cake Theory from the rest of the competitors. Here are some referential images I've collected to gather the ideas visually (image 8.) Then I went on the start sketching the first drafts for the logo (image 9-10.)

The last idea was the one I liked most in the first round. I presented this to the client, but he was not too impressed. His comments were that it looked weak, did not capture attention and did not really follow the brand personality we had built together. But he said the idea of cutting without showing physical 'cake' was good. I took the comments, and rethink it over again. I agreed that it was too weak and will definitely not work in small sizes.

I made some improvements on the design, and this time presented all the 6 new ideas to the client. All still revolved around the same idea, but this time I was more careful with implementing the personality and emphasis on the visual impact (image 11-16.)

The feedbacks from the client were better, as he likes many of the ideas. After some discussions, we decided together that the second idea fit most with the brand personality and possess the most captivating quality that makes it memorable and stand out from the rest of the competitors. The development on the second idea continues.

I refined the logo, changing the type to Gotham, as I find it fits better the brand personality and keywords. Some slicing differentiation was explored along with color schemes (image 17.) I also came up with the idea that perhaps the main logo can also be animated like the idea 5 and 6 in the second round. Here are some possibilities (image 18.)

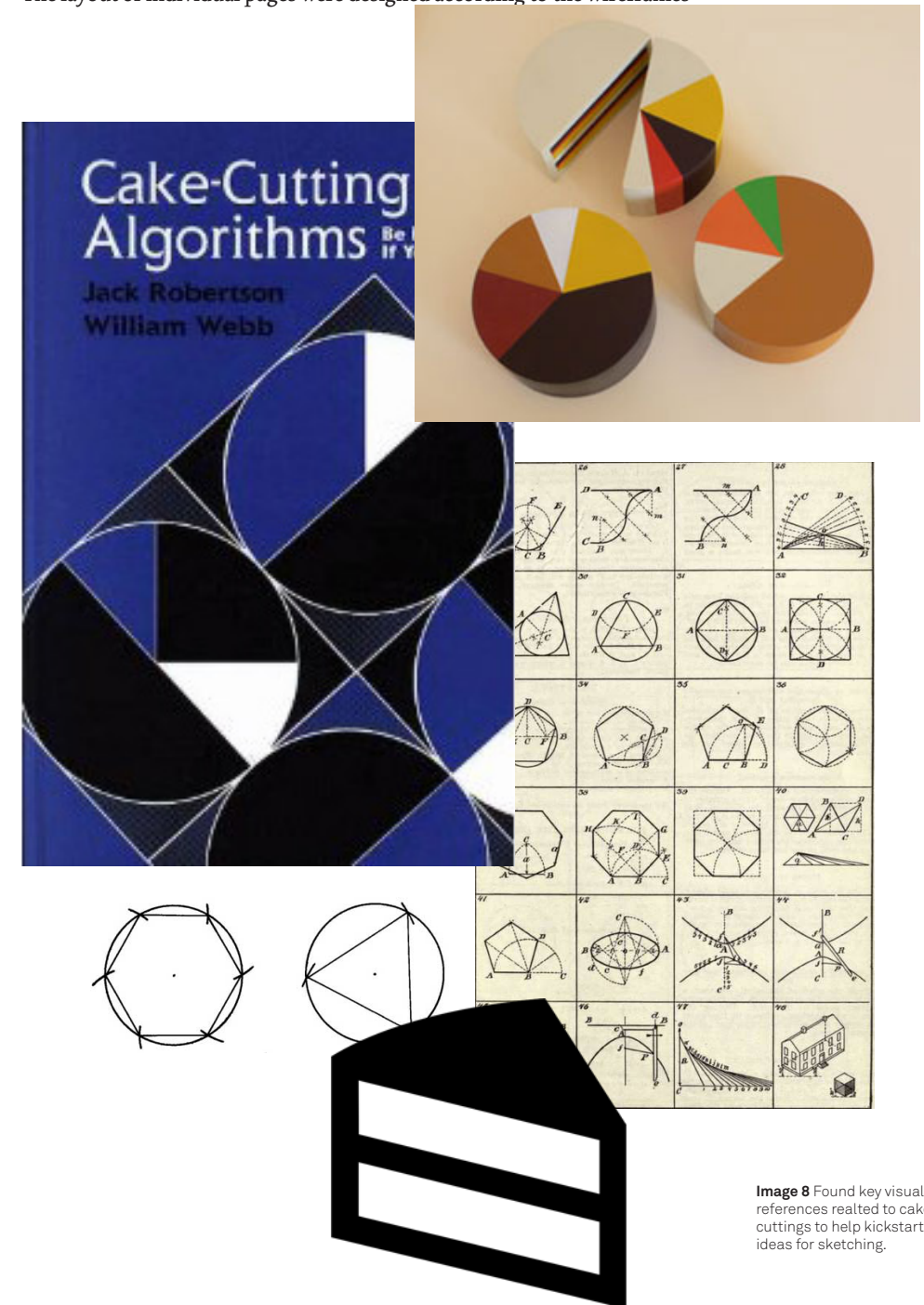
The client liked the idea, but he was more keen to focus on the official logo for now. The variations can later be applied as an add-on if the visual identity proves strong enough.

I created other visual elements to go with the logo (image 19) with color variations. The elements try to represent the slashing, cutting action. The business card, for example, looks as if it has been sliced and about to come apart in the middle.

Finally, I've arrived at the final design (image 20.) The final color scheme is chosen to be neutral, due to the fact that the identity will have to accommodate various imagery from wide spectrum of projects, it would have been wiser to keep the noises down to minimum. These visual elements will be transform into various elements in the layout and UI as appropriate.

## USER INTERFACE & LAYOUT DESIGN

The layout of individual pages were designed according to the wireframes



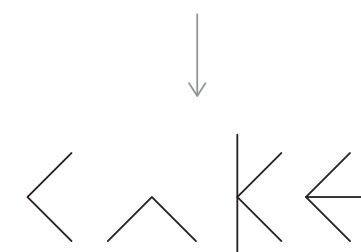
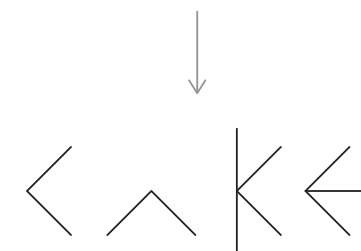
**Image 8** Found key visual references related to cake and cuttings to help kickstart the ideas for sketching.



Image 9 Early hand-drawn sketches for the logo.

# CAKETHEORY

CAKE  
THEORY



THEORY

Image 10 Early computer-drawn sketches for the logo.



< ^ k <  
THEORY

**Image 11** An improvement on the original proposal. Thicker lines and stronger typeface

CAKE  
THEORY

**Image 12** The letters 'cake' are split into pieces.

CAKE THEORY

**Image 13** Some pieces of the 'cake' is missing.



**Image 14** The idea is from a method of dividing a circle using a compass, back in school.

CAKE THE RY

CAKE THE RY

CAKE THE RY

CAKE THE RY

CAKE THE RY

CAKE THE RY

CAKE THE RY

**Image 15** Utilizing the nature of digital media, the logos are changing when the cursors move over, displaying different ways to split a cake.



**Image 16** Same idea as the previous, the word 'cake' and 'theory' form two division lines which are not in the same positions.

# CAKE THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY

CAKE  
THEORY



CAKE  
THEORY



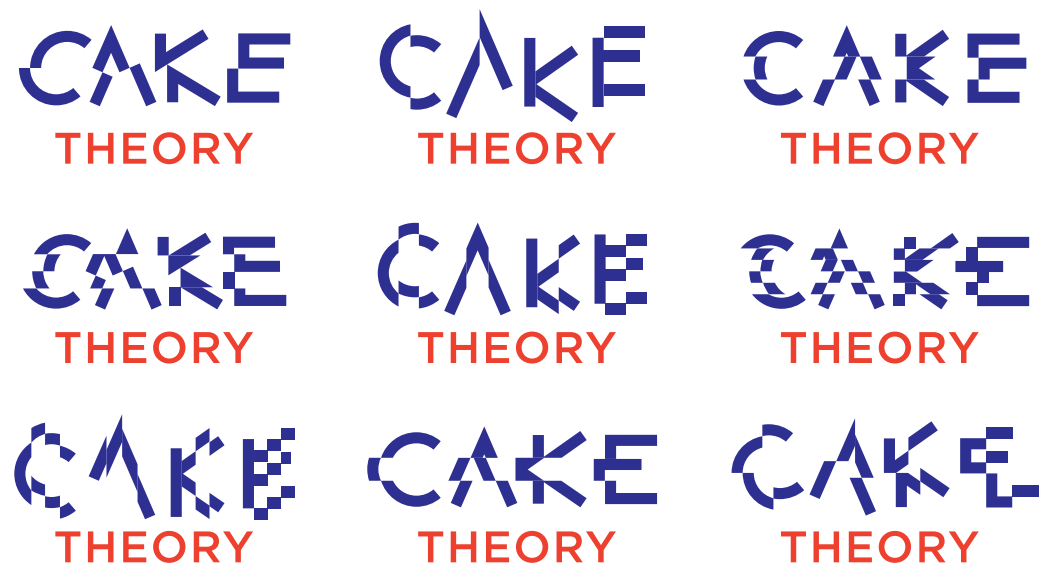
CAKE  
THEORY



CAKE  
THEORY



**Image 17** Logo refinement process, with different ways to split the word 'cake' and color combinations. The logotype is based on **GOTHAM** typeface.



**Image 18** Various cuttings can form animated versions of the logo.



**Image 19** Supporting visual elements are designed based on the cutting idea from the logo.

# CAKE THEORY



**Image 20** Finalized logo and visual identity.

and the visual identity. During this process, I found out that Gotham typeface did not yet have the web-font version<sup>2</sup>, forcing me to find a suitable alternatives quick. After a period of huntings, I've fortunately found a close-enough font named Novecento, designed by Synthview Type Design, a one man project of the independent graphic and type designer Jan Tonellato ([www.synthview.com](http://www.synthview.com)) The best thing of all is that it is free!

The worst thing was that I had to change all the typography on the web to accommodate this change. Novecento is not as professional looking or as sharp in details as Gotham, but it is of adequate quality. While there are other substitutes out there that may prove more professional, it does not look as close to Gotham as. Decision was made. Another set back is that Novecento does not have small caps letters. Here is the comparison between the two typefaces (image 21.)

The wording 'theory' on the logo also had to be changed to Novecento, but the 'cake' can stay the same since I draft over Gotham with minor adjustments and break the letters down myself. Following is what the final layouts look like (image 22.)

## CURRENT STATUS

Cake Theory is now being coded and programmed with a programming team hired by my client. I am still from time to time supervising them where problems or questions arise regarding the layout. Apart from that I am also working on the motion graphics to help explaining what Cake Theory is and how does it work in a concise manner. Cake Theory is expected to be launched by the first quarter of 2013.

After launching, there will be some adjustments made to accommodate users feedbacks and additional features.

<sup>2</sup>. Webfonts are a font format with a specific license that permits web designers and developers to use real typography online without losing the advantages of live text—dynamic, searchable, accessible content. *What are webfonts?* (2012)

**LOREM IP-  
SUM DOLOR  
SIT AMET,**  
CONSECTETUR AD-  
IPISCING ELIT. ETIAM  
VESTIBULUM RUTRUM  
DICTUM. Quisque sed  
risus elit. Aenean ac  
leo diam. Morbi et velit urna.

Vestibulum tortor dolor, vestibulum non  
volutpat sed, port

Cras sit amet enim eu est congue aliquet. Nullam eget sodales nunc. Sed et leo risus.  
Aliquam erat enim, ullamcorper in commodo sit amet, dapibus ut orci. Duis tristique hendrerit diam, ac placerat mauris lacinia at.

**LOREM IP-  
SUM DOLOR  
SIT AMET,**  
CONSECTETUR AD-  
IPISCING ELIT. ETIAM  
VESTIBULUM RUTRUM  
DICTUM. QUISQUE SED  
RISUS ELIT. AENEAN AC  
LEO DIAM. MORBI ET VELIT URNA.  
VESTIBULUM TORTOR DOLOR, VESTIBULUM  
NON VOLUTPAT SED, PORT

CRAS SIT AMET ENIM EU EST CONGUE ALIQUET. NULLAM EGET SODALES NUNC. SED ET  
LEO RISUS. ALIQUAM ERAT ENIM, ULLAMCORPER IN COMMODO SIT AMET, DAPIBUS UT  
ORCI. DUIS TRISTIQUE HENDRERIT DIAM, AC PLACERAT MAURIS LACINIA AT.

**Image 21** Type specimen comparison between **GOTHAN** (left) and **NOVECENTO WIDE** (right.)

Note that Novecento Wide does not have lower caps letters in the glyphs.



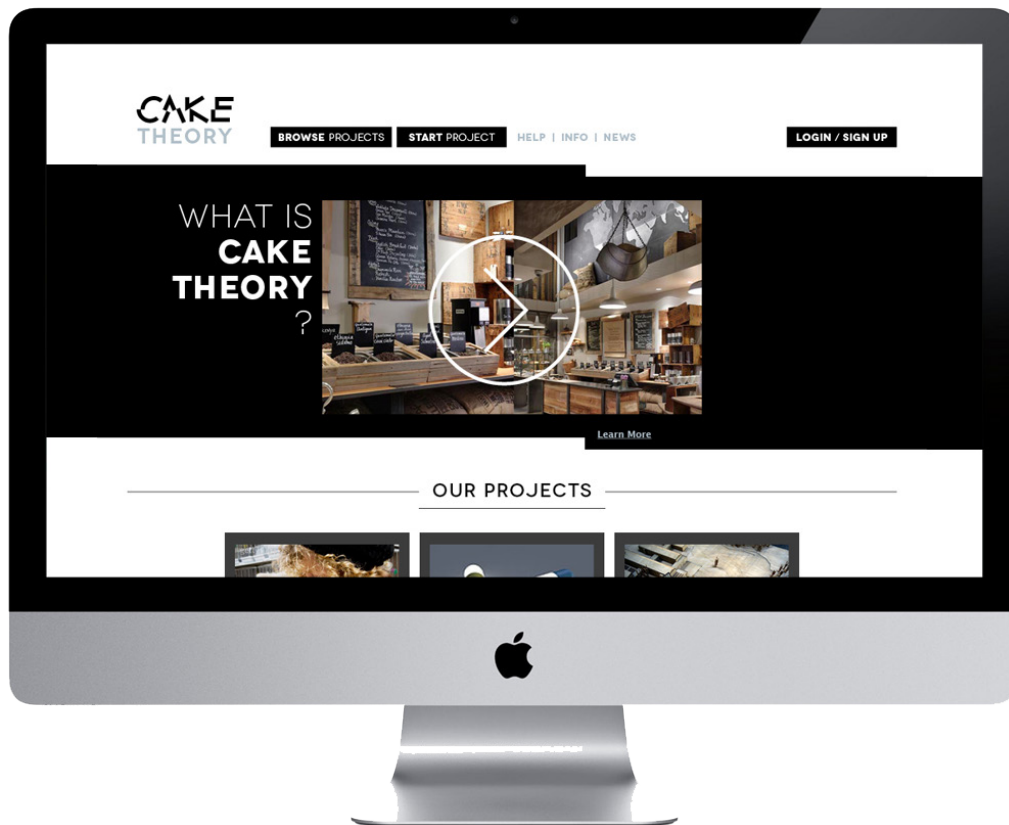
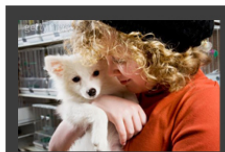


Image 22 (series) Example of Cake Theory website layouts

## OUR PROJECTS

Discover great passions



### PAWPALS

To et, quisctas aut mincitra veles  
ipisquo ma sa consecu scitem re  
quod quis mo est officil lati-  
atquis eliqui velissum aut am  
consect urionised ut rem qui



sales ending in 17 DAYS



### KOBRA: NEW MEDIC...

To et, quisctas aut mincitra veles  
ipisquo ma sa consecu scitem re  
quod quis mo est officil lati-  
atquis eliqui velissum aut am  
consect urionised ut rem qui



sales ending in 14 HOURS



### ZONE ZERO

To et, quisctas aut mincitra veles  
ipisquo ma sa consecu scitem re  
quod quis mo est officil lati-  
atquis eliqui velissum aut am  
consect urionised ut rem qui



sales ending in 3 DAYS

FIND ME  
PROJECTS  
I MAY LIKE

### FILTERS

#### SEARCH

#### SORT BY

PIECES OF CAKE LEFT

#### CATEGORIES

##### FEATURED

- ☐ Staff Picks
- ☒ Best Selling
- ☒ Last Pieces Left!

##### INTEREST

- ☐ Arts and Design
- ☒ Cafe and Restaurants
- ☒ Food
- ☒ Technology
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Social Welfare
- ☐ Education

##### LOCATION

- ☒ New York
- ☒ Los Angeles
- ☒ Bangkok

add my city



### PAWPALS

To et, quisctas aut mincitra veles  
ipisquo ma sa consecu scitem re  
quod quis mo est officil lati-  
atquis eliqui velissum aut am  
consect urionised ut rem qui



sales ending in 17 DAYS



### KOBRA: NEW MEDIC...

To et, quisctas aut mincitra veles  
ipisquo ma sa consecu scitem re  
quod quis mo est officil lati-  
atquis eliqui velissum aut am  
consect urionised ut rem qui



sales ending in 14 HOURS

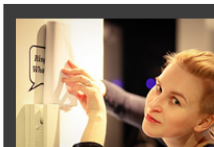


### ZONE ZERO

To et, quisctas aut mincitra veles  
ipisquo ma sa consecu scitem re  
quod quis mo est officil lati-  
atquis eliqui velissum aut am  
consect urionised ut rem qui



sales ending in 3 DAYS



## EDIT PROJECT

### KOFFEE, NEW ORGANIC COFFEE SHOP IN TOWN

TIPS AND TRICKS

#### PROJECT INFO

#### EXPENSE DETAILS

#### CAKE MANAGER

#### PREVIEW PROJECT

You have X days left to edit the project information  
After this, please use 'UPDATE' tab in project view to add further information.

Project Title\* Koffee

EDIT

Project Image\* mykoffeeimage.jpg

EDIT

Video Link ? www.youtube.com/abc1234

EDIT

Short Description\* Faccum, num recearum inumenda  
sit magnamet qui blandellenda  
cuptas explatiam, core nulp  
culpa aut quam id utemolla del  
ium cum fugit re cor sit, nus.  
Aperupta vita is ipsae latep  
repudae volo delesti inctur?  
Damusdant enimi, odipicae quo  
maximus ut int et am inctur aut

EDIT

#### Comments

- ☒ Everyone can comment on my project.
- ☐ Only my customers can comment on my projects.

Further Description Faccum, num recearum inumenda sit magnamet qui  
blandellenda cuptas explatiam, core nulp culpa aut  
quam id utemolla del ium cum fugit re cor sit, nus.  
Aperupta vita is ipsae latep  
repudae volo delesti inctur?  
Damusdant enimi, odipicae quo  
maximus ut int et am inctur aut

EDIT



Faccum, num recearum inumenda sit magnamet qui  
blandellenda cuptas explatiam, core nulp culpa aut  
quam id utemolla del ium cum fugit re cor sit, nus.  
Aperupta vita is ipsae latep  
repudae volo delesti inctur?  
Damusdant enimi, odipicae quo  
maximus ut int et am inctur aut

CANCEL

SAVE CHANGES



## CAKE PROJECTS

### KOFFEE, NEW ORGANIC COFFEE SHOP IN TOWN

DETAILS

UPDATE (3)

CUSTOMERS (12)

**ABOUT PROJECT**  

The Finished Product: Facet Collection is the newest material exploration by Process + Content, bringing vinyl to the floor, in a interactive + customizable tiling system, featuring bold, geometric designs. Fools Gold, is the first color combination of the Facet Collection, the 3 diamond shaped tiles come in matte white, matte black + mirrored gold. The diamonds are precision cut to meet seamlessly with the sides of each of the 3 shapes. The application of the thin tiles to the floor is meant to delineate space.

**PROJECT BY**  

© Sarun Pinyarat  
 pinyarat.s@me.com  
 www.pinyarats.org  
 Helsinki, Finland

**EXPENSE PLAN**  

Money will be put into good use! We are almost there with the shop, we just need 2,000 USD more as to run operations and hire people for the first 3 months!

Breakdowns:	
Coffee Machine	500 USD
Hire People	1,000 USD
Instances of a long item name	500 USD

The Finished Product: Facet Collection is the newest material exploration by Process + Content, bringing vinyl to the floor, in a interactive + customizable tiling system, featuring bold, geometric designs. Fools Gold, is the first color combination of the Facet Collection, the 3 diamond shaped tiles come in matte white, matte black + mirrored gold. The diamonds are precision cut to meet seamlessly with the sides of each of the 3 shapes. The application of the thin tiles to the floor is meant to delineate space.

**SPREAD THE WORDS**

Like Tweet SHARE

**PROJECT DETAILS**

The Finished Product: Facet Collection is the newest material exploration by Process + Content, bringing vinyl to the floor, in a interactive + customizable tiling system, featuring bold, geometric designs. Fools Gold, is the first color combination of the Facet Collection, the 3 diamond shaped tiles come in matte white, matte black + mirrored gold. The diamonds are precision cut to meet seamlessly with the sides of each of the 3 shapes. The application of the thin tiles to the floor is meant to delineate space.

CAKE ON SALES

EDIT

70 pieces left  
30 pieces sold

sales ending in  
29 DAYS 2 HOURS 3 MINS

**BUY CAKES NOW!**

**1 PIECE: 10 USD**

**3 CUPS OF COFFEE COUPON**  
 Effrede condaci ptilliae cupio Cata, uncepecon tem verum es Ad ad diem niam et vid revive, virmant. O

**BUY THIS PACKAGE!**

**10 PIECES: 90 USD**

**1 YEAR MEMBERSHIP!**  
 Effrede condaci ptilliae cupio Cata, uncepecon tem verum es Ad ad diem niam et vid revive, virmant. O

**BUY THIS PACKAGE!**

**SPREAD THE WORDS**

## BUY CAKES!

### ADJUST PAYMENT, CHOOSE REWARDS!

1

ADJUST YOUR PAYMENT

**YOU ARE BUYING**

1 PIECES OF CAKE

YOU ARE PAYING 10 USD

**YOU ARE GETTING**

**1 PIECE: 10 USD**

**3 CUPS OF COFFEE COUPON**  
 Effrede condaci ptilliae cupio Cata, uncepecon tem verum es Ad ad diem niam et vid revive, virmant. O

**ADD MORE PAYMENT FOR THIS PACKAGE!**

10 PIECES: 90 USD

**1 YEAR MEMBERSHIP!**  
 Effrede condaci ptilliae cupio Cata, uncepecon tem verum es Ad ad diem niam et vid revive, virmant. O

**ADD MORE PAYMENT FOR THIS PACKAGE!**

20 PIECES: 180 USD

**3 YEARS MEMBERSHIP!**  
 Effrede condaci ptilliae cupio Cata, uncepecon tem verum es Ad ad diem niam et vid revive, virmant. O

2

CHOOSE HIGHLIGHTED AWARD(S) YOU WANT

3

PROVIDE THE SELLER YOUR CONTACTS FOR REWARD DELIVERY

Name\*

E-mail\*

Comment on the project

**TO PAYMENT**

Caloom is a local map-based service which reveals the offers and demands of resources –both goods and services, available within the community of close geographical locations. The demands and resources can be posted and accessed by anyone, anywhere at any given time within user-controlled privacy measure.

The service is primarily to support the (broken) interaction between local government (including schools), third sector organizations, small and family-sized business (including farmers), neighbourhood and families. These target audiences have interdependency which are not working well due to communication problems and unfamiliarity with one another's needs and offerings.

By enabling the locals to overview online the resources within close proximity, they can connect offline physically, at anytime.

#### The way Caloom works

FOR USERS WITH RESOURCES TO OFFER	FOR USERS LOOKING FOR RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Sign up</li> <li>– Fill in the available resource details (what, when, where, worth and whom)</li> <li>– Your resource goes live on Caloom!</li> <li>– Share the resource details through social networks.</li> <li>– Edit your resource, if necessary.</li> <li>– Offers received.</li> <li>– Communication (within or outside Caloom) on how the resources can be exchanged and picked up (aim is to get people together in the real world vs virtual, hence limited social network functionality.)</li> <li>– Exchange successful in physical world!</li> <li>– If the resource is not available any more, delete the resource from Caloom If resource is on going for a period of time, Caloom automatically deletes it when it expires under 'when'.</li> <li>– Feed-backs to the resource taker.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Heard about Caloom and visit the website.</li> <li>– Search for resources available via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What: categories of resources available (goods or services, then sub categories...)</li> <li>Where: distance from where users are (default set at 5 km. radius)</li> <li>When: scrub through timeline to see what is available now and in the future.</li> <li>Worth: look through between free, exchangeable or paid resources.</li> <li>Whom: look through users profiles.</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Find the resources that match the demands.</li> <li>– Contact the resource owner, either within Caloom or outside communication.</li> <li>– Exchange successful in physical world!</li> <li>– Feed-backs to the resource owner.</li> </ul>

Caloom help to create a better community. By connecting local citizens together, the community is strengthened. It also will be the first blocks of codes available within the Caloom open source environment, which everyone can retrieve (or steal) and develop their own version of Caloom to suits their needs, in no time, and for free.

#### INCUBATION OF THE CONCEPT

Initiated by Jeroen Carlese, Caloom was born out of a projection that food, water and energy supply in the world will become more scarce and that it is more important than ever communities become self-sustainable. One way to do that is through exchanging resources within the communities: between local government, third sector organizations, local businesses, neighbors and families. Caloom (Ca-Loom) is a combination of two words: Carta (map) and Bloom (to glow.) The map is the center piece of the service which evolves around the relevant 5-Ws in our daily lives: What, Where, When, Whom and Worth.

It took some time to realize what Caloom is really about and how it is different from other similar ones like Netcyclor or Craigslist. To communicate my understanding with Jeroen, I quickly came up with some sketches of the UI, as a tool to communicate in early stages (image 23.) Jeroen was content with the design, seeing that I started to understand what Caloom is actually all about. Then the real works began.

#### COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

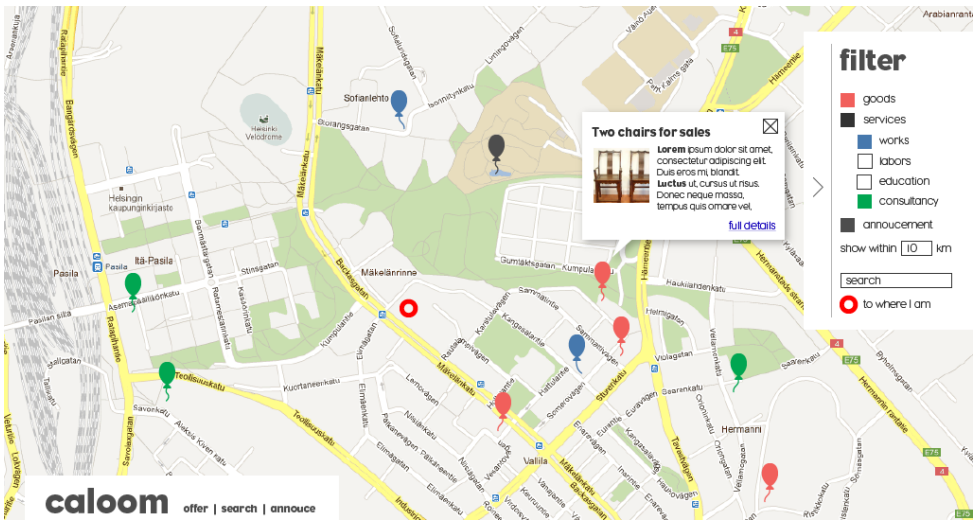
I began to analyze competitors in the field, not just only to distinguish Caloom but also to see what visual design decisions have been made in other services and what I can learn from them. Jeroen had also done the same, but with more emphasis on functionality (image 24.)

#### PROTOTYPING

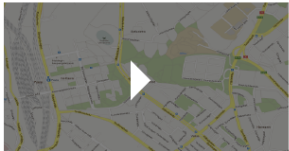
In order to gain an insight if users can actually understand the conception and the interface of such new service, prototyping is an ideal method. Paper prototyping is one of the most economical user testing methods in term of time and man resources. It can be done rather quickly due to its lo-fi nature and can be conducted at a very early stage, which is perfect fit for Caloom's situation at that time.

I performed the test with the total of five volunteers. The results turned out to be massively helpful. It enabled me to see the service and its interface from different perspectives. Most importantly, it revealed the 'gap' between what the designers and the users have in mind (image 25.)





#### What is Caloom?



Caloom is a local map-based service - a tool for connecting resources within a community. The service provides information for local communities for their citizens to connect the strengths and resources available in the area, as well as other important notices.

By enabling the locals to overview online the resources within close proximity, they can connect offline physically, at any time.

#### Login / Register

email  password  go

#### Visit other calooms

[caloom.helsinki.com](http://caloom.helsinki.com)  
[caloom.berlin.com](http://caloom.berlin.com)  
[caloom.amsterdam.com](http://caloom.amsterdam.com)  
[caloom.bangkok.com](http://caloom.bangkok.com)

Image 23 Very first UI sketch based on my interpretation of Caloom after first meetings.

URL	in very short	pricing	ads	add	look for	map centered	products	labour and services	materials	en
<a href="http://www.swapfree.com">http://www.swapfree.com</a>		0.50-1.00 usd/swap	facebook	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	
<a href="http://www.craigslist.com">http://www.craigslist.com</a>	anything for sale	centage (from jobist)	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	
not active: <a href="http://www.buythechange.com">http://www.buythechange.com</a>	buy and sell locally with friends, neighbors and independent businesses			yes	yes	no				
<a href="http://www.localeyes.org">http://www.localeyes.org</a>	localsharing on map	free	no	yes	yes	yes, but only on home page	yes	yes	no	
<a href="http://www.freecycle.org">http://www.freecycle.org</a>	grassroots and entirely nonprofit	free	google-ads?	yes	yes					
<a href="http://www.hyperlocal.fi">http://www.hyperlocal.fi</a> --> <a href="http://www.omakaupunki.fi">www.omakaupunki.fi</a>				no	yes	yes	no	commercial	no	com
<a href="http://www.foursquare.com">www.foursquare.com</a>	find friends and locations		yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	
<a href="http://www.everyblock.com">www.everyblock.com</a> (msnbc)	news in your location	free	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	
<a href="http://www.gowalla.com">www.gowalla.com</a>	search people and places	free				yes	no	commercial	no	
<a href="http://www.marktplaats.nl">www.marktplaats.nl</a>						yes				
<a href="http://www.eniro.fi">http://www.eniro.fi</a>						yes				
<a href="http://www.kuivoma.fi">http://www.kuivoma.fi</a>						no				
<a href="http://www.kassi.eu">http://www.kassi.eu</a>						not yet				
<a href="http://www.sizi.org">http://www.sizi.org</a>						not sure				
<a href="http://www.netcyclar">http://www.netcyclar</a>						no				
<a href="http://www.GreenRiders">http://www.GreenRiders</a>	car/trip pooling					yes	no	no	no	
<a href="http://www.Kyydit.net">http://www.Kyydit.net</a>						no				
<a href="http://www.Finderbase.com">http://www.Finderbase.com</a>	lost and found on a map					yes	yes	no	no	
<a href="http://www.Nextdoor.com">http://www.Nextdoor.com</a>										
<a href="http://www.Jobita.fi">http://www.Jobita.fi</a>										
<a href="http://www.Vaattene/vahtoon.fi">http://www.Vaattene/vahtoon.fi</a>										
<a href="http://www.Lainaseja.fi">http://www.Lainaseja.fi</a>										
<a href="http://www.Olivi.org">http://www.Olivi.org</a>										
<a href="http://www.alikapankki.fi">http://www.alikapankki.fi</a>										
<a href="http://www.color.com">http://www.color.com</a>										
<a href="http://www.plancast.com">http://www.plancast.com</a>										
<a href="http://www.usahide.com">http://www.usahide.com</a>	emergencies on a map					yes				
<a href="http://www.greenmaps.org">http://www.greenmaps.org</a>										
<a href="http://www.seeddevelopment.com">http://www.seeddevelopment.com</a>	innovator & projects									
<a href="http://www.geodan.com">http://www.geodan.com</a>	GIS consulting									
<a href="http://www.mapbox.com">http://www.mapbox.com</a>	custom map tiles									

Image 24 Competitor analysis matrix. Compiled by Jeroen Carlese.

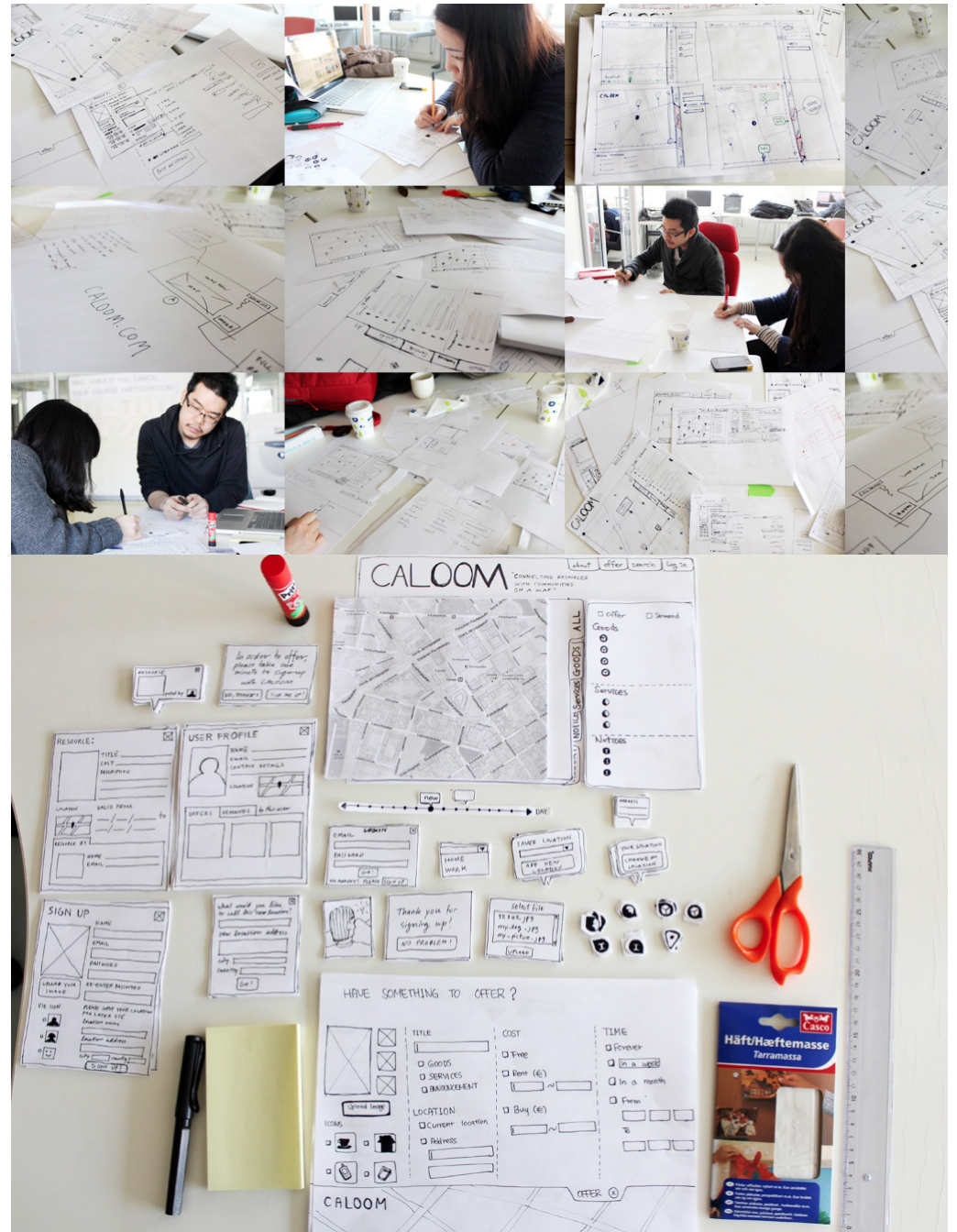
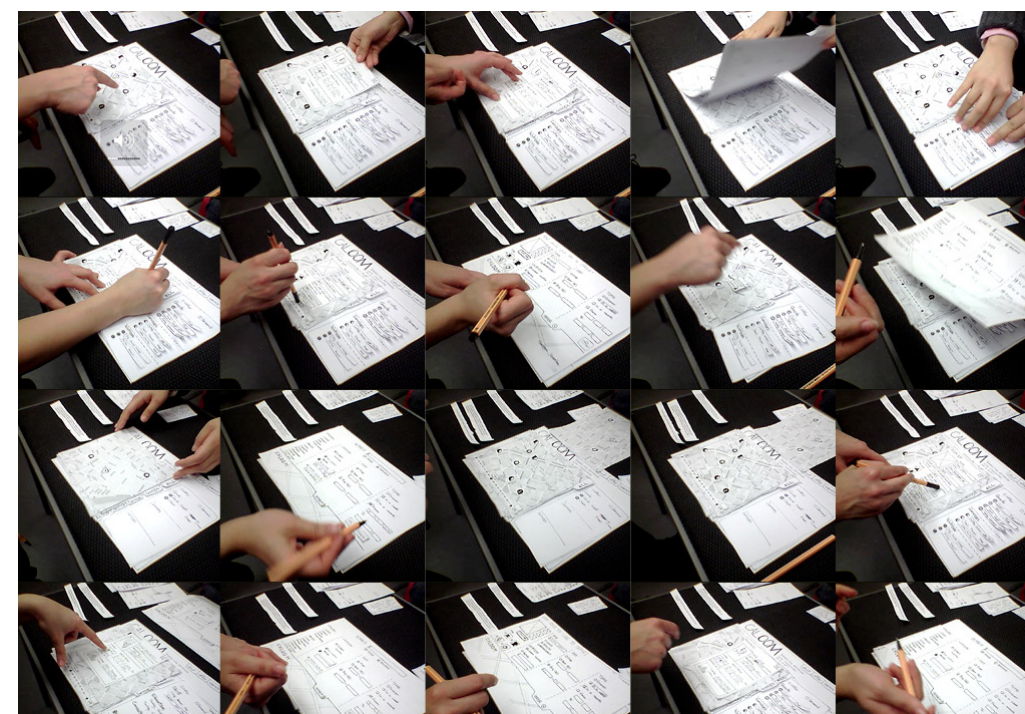
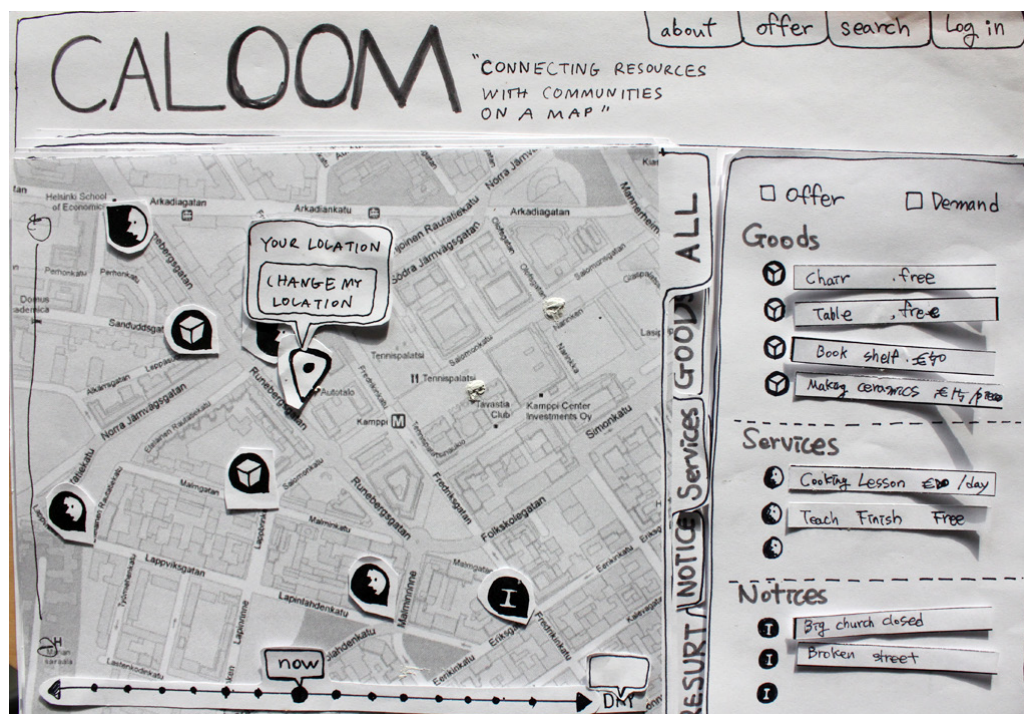
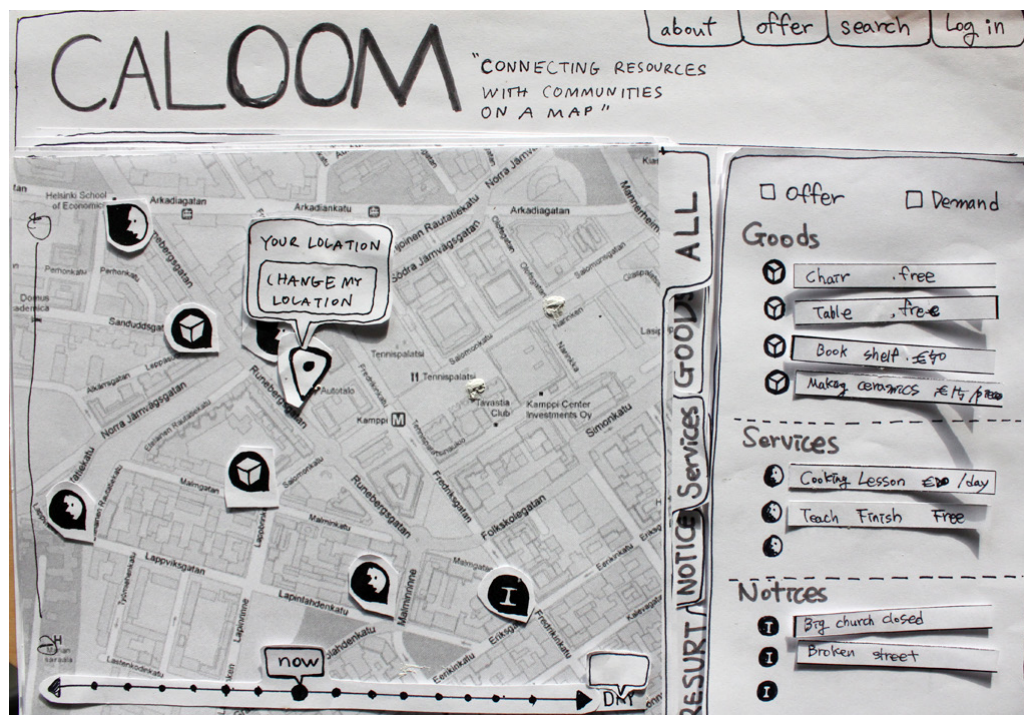


Image 25 (series) Paper prototyping process: brainstorming - building mockups - testing and evaluating.







## INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Insights gained from paper prototyping proved invaluable which led to the core structure design (image 26.) I called these 'Entities and Modules'. Modules are how functionality should be grouped together, controlling related entities. It all leads back to the 5W at the beginning, which makes perfect sense. Information architecture is then created on the basis of this finding. Diagrams and charts were being drawn rapidly (image 27.)

## USER INTERFACE & LAYOUT DESIGN

With the manifestation around the information architecture, the design of the UI emerged quite naturally. This is what the new design looks like (image 28.)

While the newly designed UI is a much improvement on previous sketches, there are notable problems at hand.

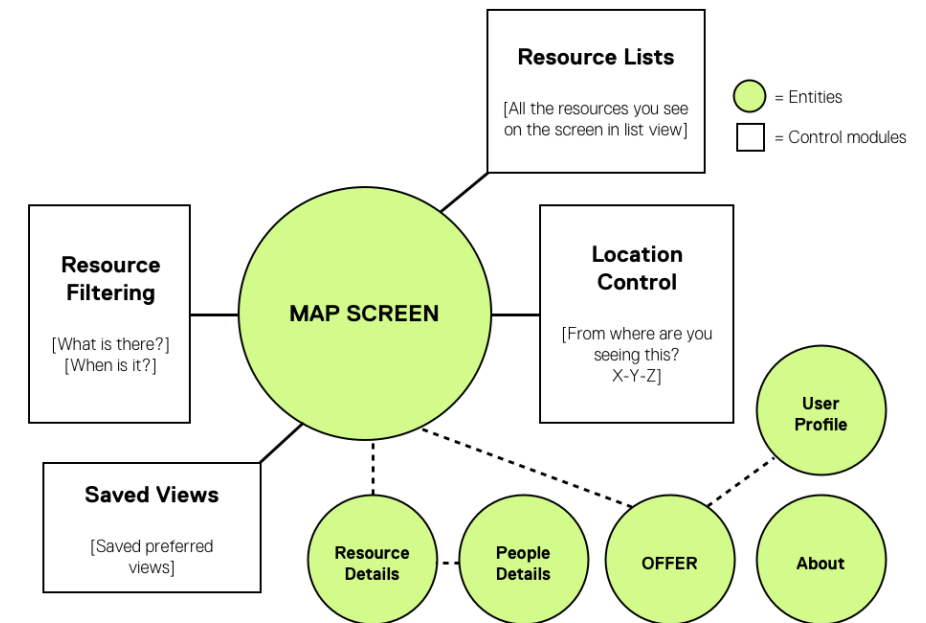
- With my lack of HTML and CSS skills, I could only draw the UI using the static tools like Adobe InDesign and Illustrator, which is very hard to be implemented since, unlike Cake Theory, there was no one to slice up the design into pieces and composed together in HTML. Our only programmer in the team, Kalle, had his focused on building the backend engine (like PHP and the database), and we did not have a front-end developer.

- The design was still overwhelming for the first-time users. It was difficult to gasp in seconds upon landing what is this all about, which is extremely vital.

- There was no way to efficiently collaborate the ideas between me and Jeroen apart from making changes in the Illustrator file directly. The process was slow and painstaking.

Then along came Bootstrap ([www.bootstrap.com](http://www.bootstrap.com).) Bootstrap is a framework from Twitter for kick starting development of any responsive web applications. It includes CSS & HTML for typography, forms, buttons tables, grids, etc. Bootstrap is easy enough to be learned by those who only have basic understanding of HTML and CSS, so it was a perfect fit for me. The best thing about Bootstrap is also that the design can be simultaneously tested with back-end codes and can be seamlessly collaborated through GitHub, one of the most popular open source code repository site ([www.github.com](http://www.github.com).)

Another notable feature from Bootstrap is its looks and feels. Being a framework, its looks stay minimal and neutral, in order to be flexible and adaptable to any styles, contents and functionalities. This fits Caloom well because Jeroen already had this vision that Caloom will eventually become completely open-source that anyone can download and make their own version of Caloom, just like Ushahidi, a non-profit tech company that special-



## CALOOM Information Architecture

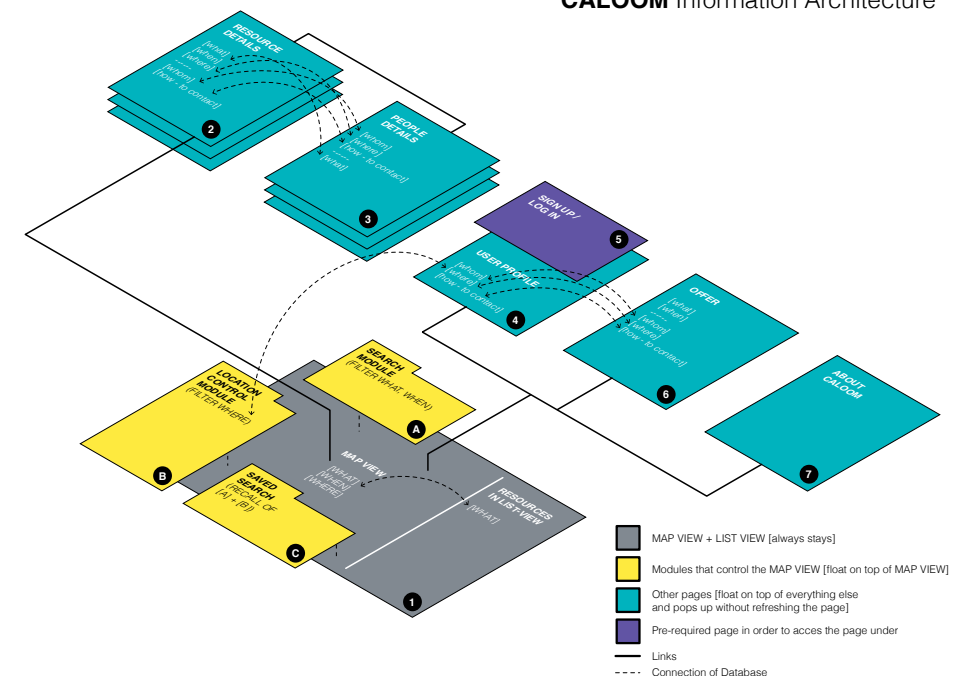


Image 26 (top) 'Entities and Modules' for Caloom interface, as a result from user testing.

Image 27 (above) Information architecture is created based on the 'modules'.

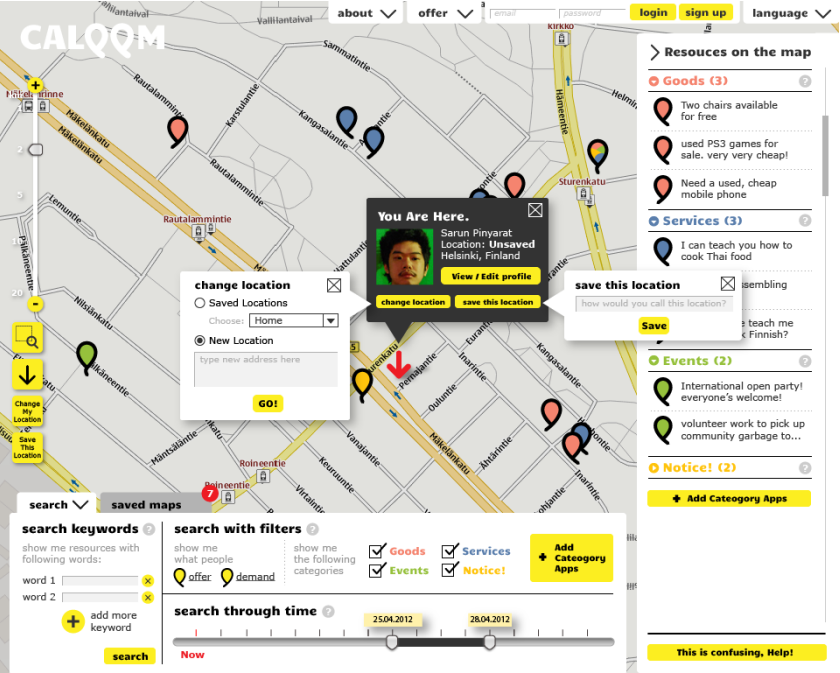
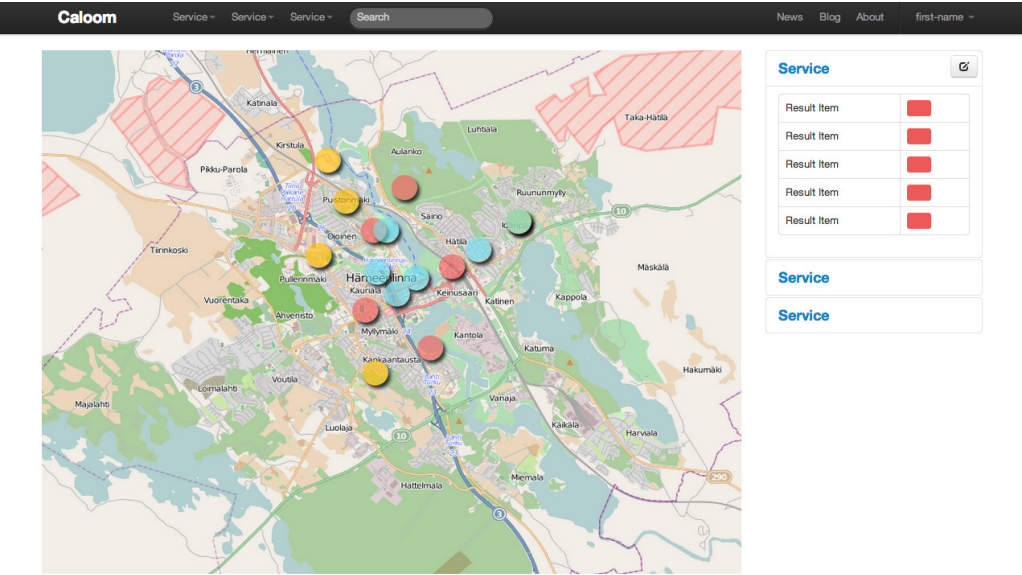
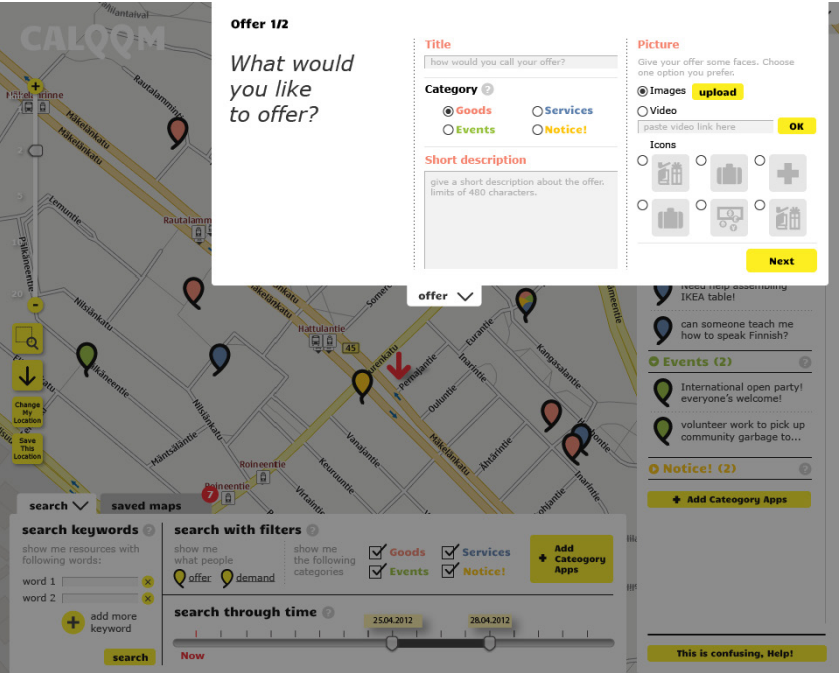


Image 28 Static UI design based on the information architecture, created using Adobe Illustrator.

izes in developing free and open source software for information collection, visualization and interactive mapping (www.ushahidi.com.) This is what the latest UI looks like before I left the team (image 29.)

### CURRENT STATUS

The UI development came to a stop when Jeroen and Kalle had to shift focus to work on a commissioned project by Aalto Global Impact (which is somewhat similar to Caloom to a certain extent) and I had to actually start writing this thesis. Hopefully, there can be an opportunity after this to really complete Caloom as I still hold great belief this can be something great and extremely useful for any local communities around the world.



The maps you follow

Image 29 The current state of the UI before the project temporary comes to a stop.



# chapter four conclusion

Based on the findings from the five case studies analyzed in *Chapter 2* and the lessons learned from the two hands-on projects in *Chapter 3*, I am able to draw three conclusions to answer my research question: How can visual designers contribute to collaborative consumption services?

*First*, there are various actions in the design process that visual designers can take to contribute and improve collaborative consumption services. From the comprehensive findings, I have categorized them into seven steps. Each step completes the sentence. Visual designers can contribute to collaborative consumption services by

- Learning the contexts
- Planning the projects
- Ensuring the performance
- Giving it the right face
- Associating with target audience
- Facilitating social interactions, and
- Confirming quality and professionalism.

Each of these categories has its own details and examples, all referring back to the content in *Chapters 2 and 3*. For practical purposes, I have decided to display this detailed content in a separate booklet, attached as the final part of this thesis. When needed to be put into use, the booklet format is much more portable and easier to share, be it in a brainstorming session, workshop environment or in class.

*Second*, collaborative consumption services have to be designed holistically rather than departmentally. A service design approach is required. As mentioned at the beginning of *Chapter 2*, I found it difficult to grasp what points in collaborative consumption services I should analyze, with the answer as ‘everything’. Designing a collaborative consumption service is different from other visual design projects, as all the arts of branding, visual identity, information architecture, user interface, imagery and social interaction come into play at once. Each of these can’t be done in isolation, in the way many designers may be used to receiving a brief from a client and working alone at a desk, passing the completed work over to the developers. Complete synergy is needed, extremely careful planning is a must. The ideal scenario would be that everyone in the team should be present from the very beginning of concept incubation, to make sure that the whole team is always on the same page.

To achieve this, there are several methods from the area of service design that can be implemented from concept to execution. An excellent explanation of service design including various methods can be found in ‘This is Service Design Thinking’ by Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider. I have

included these methods in the guideline in appropriate categories, under the ‘Service Design Approach’ section.

*Third*, visual designers have to learn and reach beyond our comfort zones. While most of us are very familiar and capable with popular medium designs like identity design, editorials, prints and websites, collaborative consumption demands us to reach further. Front-end development knowledge (HTML, CSS, Java, etc.) is essential, as are the abilities to design structures and interfaces. Good understanding of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and social interaction are also very important. Thus, I have included a ‘Resource’ section in each of the guideline categories to assist the reader with appropriate content and learn more about specific areas.

This thesis is coming to an end and I’d like to end with a quote from Botsman and Roo. Without their inspiring book, the idea of investigating this topic, or to find the right starting point, would have been almost impossible. Here is what they said at the end of their book:

*“We believe we will look back and see this epoch as a time when we took a leap and re-created a sustainable system built to serve basic human needs – in particular, the needs for community, individual identity, recognition and meaningful activity – rooted in age-old market principles and collaborative behavior. Indeed, it will be referred to as a revolution, so to speak, when society, faced with grave challenges, started to make a seismic shift from an unfettered zeal for individual getting and spending towards a rediscovery of collective goods.”<sup>1</sup>*

Having gone through my thesis, I sincerely hope that I have managed to reach all my goals: to persuade you, whoever you are – academic, entrepreneur, innovator, designer, interested individual – to leave the old, sinking, hyper consumption ship behind and jump on board the new collaborative consumption vessel, and to do so with pride in shaping a sustainable future together, with curiosity to go out and learn about this growing community.

Please enjoy the guideline booklet.

*Thank you, and have a good day.*

ขอบคุณ และขอให้มีความสุขครับ

# few more things

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# appen- dices

## APPENDIX A

In her book 'Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team', Wheeler has suggested that a good brand identity should possess the following qualities:

Vision  
Meaning  
Authenticity  
Differentiation  
Durability  
Coherence  
Flexibility  
Commitment  
Value

In his book 'Logo Design Love', Airey has suggested that to design a good logo, designers should:

Keep it simple  
Make it relevant  
Incorporate tradition  
Aim for distinction  
Commit to memory  
Think small  
Focus on one thing

And from these two lists, I merge what are similar and add on what are different to create my own list to evaluate each case studies' visual identity.



2

After closing the pop-up, user is once again presented with too much information. Distinguished box on the top right displays information about a user telling how great it has been since joining Couchsurfing. It is here perhaps to ensure the user that they have made the right choice in joining, but it would have made more sense if situated on landing page, encouraging people to sign up.

The rest of the text is about 'Verification', with too long explaining what it is and how it works.

If user chooses to ignore all this, the most obvious and prominent button to continue is the bright orange button 'Save my name and address'.

screen 3

But instead of going to the actual service (of surfing and hosting), user is redirected to 'Verification' page, which has information about payment details, etc. And since one expects Couchsurfing to be free, the user wonders what

this is all about. This may give wrong image about the service. This presents a situation where user is forced to use 'Back' button to go back where they were, even before they begin to finish the sign up process, or start using the services.

Once back to this 'Welcome' page, users have to look for other ways to move on. He may use the 'Surf' or 'Host' button on the top to do what they want, or if they spend enough time, they may see

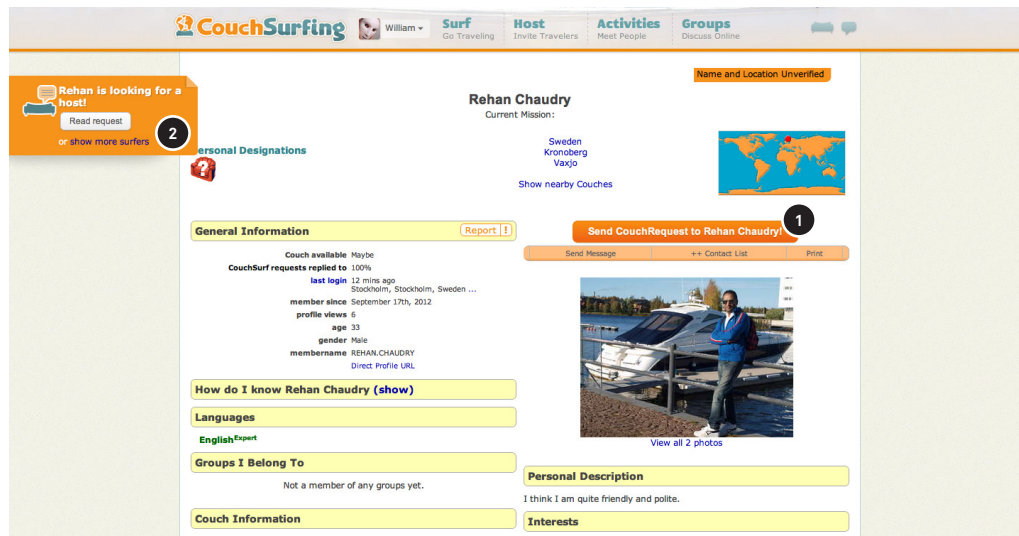
'Continue to Your Profile' hidden at the bottom, which does not have the same button language (use of orange color) as seen before, which confuses the user at the first place.

TASK 2: Try to find a host

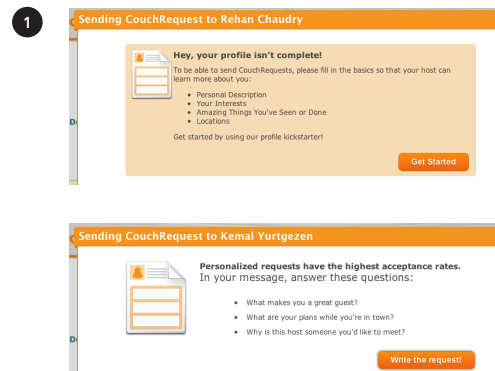
screen 4

Once the profile is set up, user is presented with 'Dashboard' page.

Looking for a surfer to host is relatively easy as top part clearly presents that information. Selection of profile images are shown under 'Surfers looking for a host near [user's registered city]', with 'Show more surfers' button clearly visible on the top right corner. Rolling over each profile image displays that profile's basic information, along with clearly visible 'Invite this Couchsurfer' button.



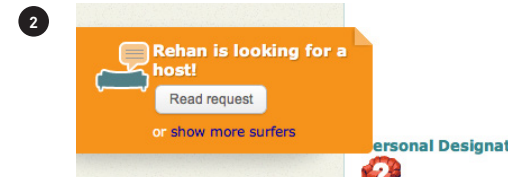
Once clicked, user is taken to that profile's page. There are two orange areas that stand out. On the left reads: '[Profile name] is looking for a host! / Read request / or show more surfers' and on the right 'Send CouchRequest to Rehan Chaudry'!



Since the area on the left looks like floating paper, it can denote that this is extra information, not the main information (to invite this profile.) So user chooses to click 'Send...' button, since he wants to send an invitation.

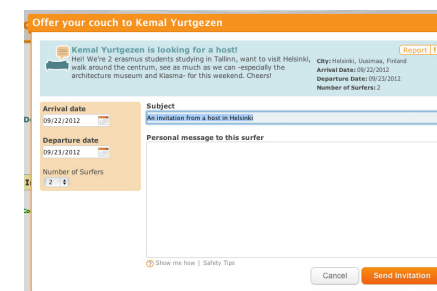
A warning message is clear and leads user to know that he must complete first the profile in order to continue.

Once all the profile information is completed, user is presented with this pop up instead. Just here then user realizes that he has come to the wrong place as this request is for him to become a guest, not a host.



This is the problem of language ambiguity and placement of button. The term CouchRequest is a technical term which new user may not understand.

Another problem is that once user clicked 'Invite this Couchsurfer' button, he would have expected that the prominent button to send an 'invitation', not a 'request'. This can be avoided by representing the two buttons close to one another so user can compare which action to take. The 'Read request' button also is ambiguous, as user wants to send an invitation, not to read a request.



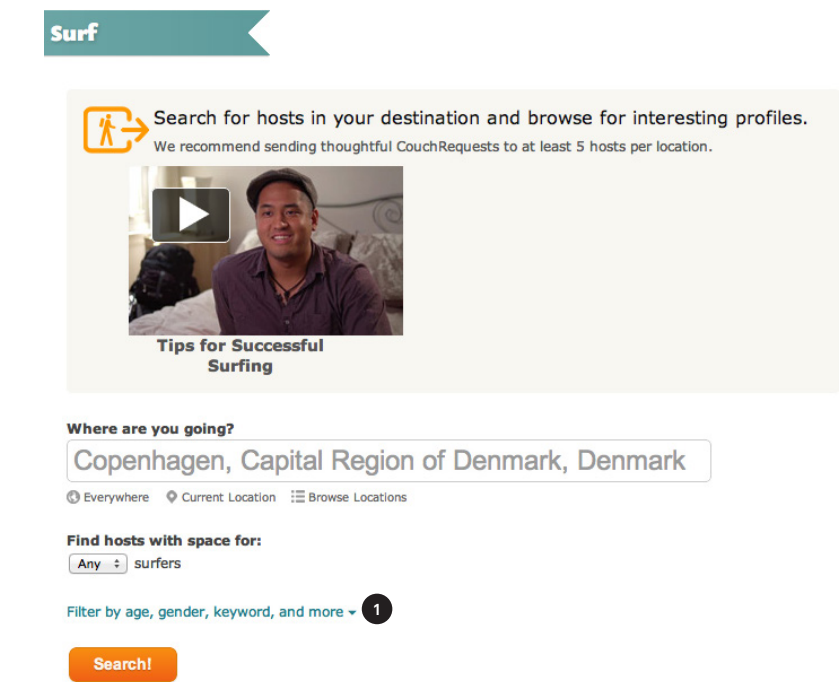
Only when clicking 'Read request', the user arrives where he wants, which is to write and send invitation.

This page is so hard to find and perhaps could have been the pop up from the 'Invite this Couchsurfer' button on the dashboard. It is understandable that Couchsurfing wants user to go first to the profile page to know about the surfer better before inviting them, but if that is the case, the language needs to be changed from 'Invite...' to 'View full profile'.



TASK 3: Try to find a host to surf with

screen 5

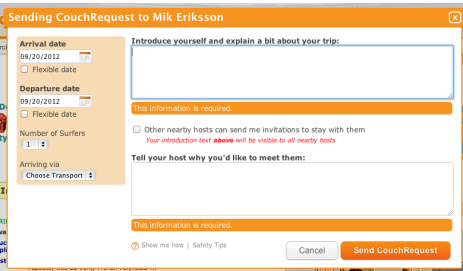


By clicking 'Surf' at the main navigation on the top, user is directed to 'Surf' page. Here, the information is well presented, with video giving

tips on how to surf successfully at the top. This is well placed as while it concerns first-timers, others can simply ignore and start searching.

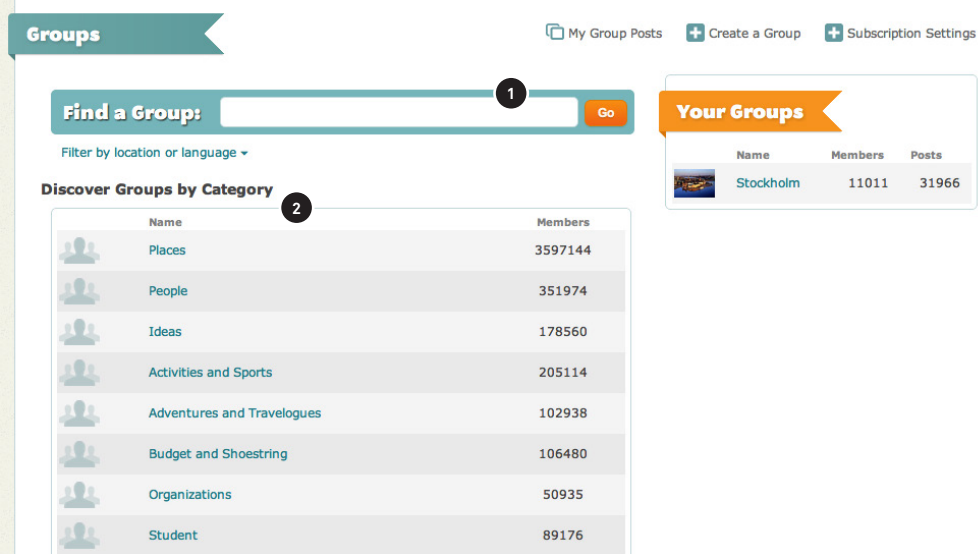
There's an option to filter results further, which is hidden at first, giving the user choice to expand it himself, so he does not feel overwhelmed with too many options.

Identifying preferred host and sending a request to them turns out to be much easier and less painful than previous two tasks. Everything performs like they should, well placed where they belong with easy-to-understand language.



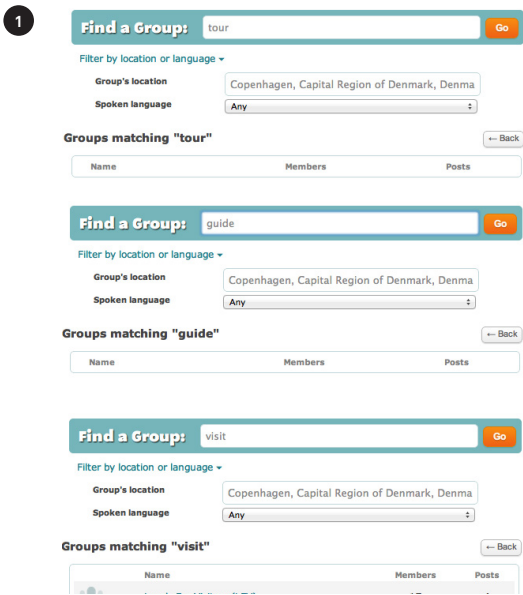
TASK 4: Look for touring, sight-seeing information in Copenhagen

screen 6



To find information about travelling with options presented in the top main navigation, 'Groups: Discuss Online' seems like the best option.

Doing so, user is landed in the main 'Group' page, with the search bar the most dominant feature, suggesting that this is what should be used (rather than 'Discovering by Category').

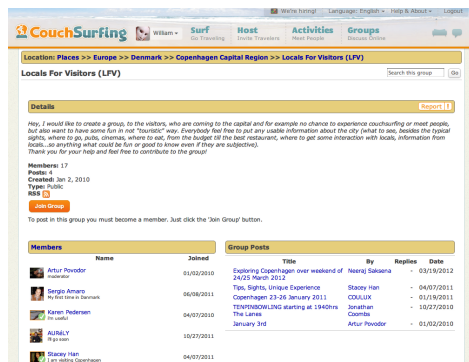


The search bar functions a little redundant, as user types the word in, without even hitting enter or 'Go' button on the right, the result is already being filtered. Perhaps it can be better by simply removing the 'Go' button altogether or that it should actually wait until user presses enter or 'Go' button to show the result.

While 'Filter by Location or Language' is a useful feature to scope down the search (because by typing 'Copenhagen', many groups appear that may not be relevant to touring information), it turns out finding touring information is very difficult.

Various terms are used to search but no suitable group comes out. Only one comes from





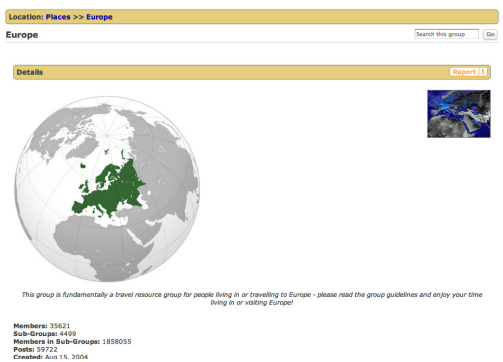
term ‘visit’, but after clicking the group, user is presented with confusion, as the layout looks completely different from the rest of the web, making him wondering if he is still in the same website. And when after reading all the information that this could be what he looks for, the group is very inactive and there has been no post in months.

Level of activeness of group would have been useful information in the search result on top of Members and Posts amount.

2

Groups in Places

Name	Members	Posts
Europe	35621	59722
South America	12234	17336
Southeast Asia	6706	11273
North America	9431	7283
Central America and the Caribbean	2671	4892
Africa	3540	4766
Middle East	2331	2864
Central Asia	2994	2226



After unsuccessful search results, user has to hit back and start all over.

This time, he approaches the category below. The best bet would be to look for information in ‘Places’. And in ‘Places’, sub-group is presented as shown. ‘Europe’ is then chosen.

Expecting to see another set up sub-groups, he is instead presented with an actual group page of ‘Europe’. (And at this point, hitting back goes back to the starting point of all categories, not the ‘Places’.)

User has to scroll down to see that there actually is a sub-group under this big group. From here ‘Denmark’ is visible, if clicked then ‘Copenhagen’ is also possible option. This process is taking too much time and does not guarantee that user will find the group he is looking for.

See all group members

Name	Mem	Post
5+1	2	-
European Tai Chi & Qi Gong	68	30
aa EURO TRIP - Planning and Budgeting your EPIC Euro Trip!	661	235
Aa single European Emergency Call: 112	6	2
a cheap, quality place to eat in every town!	133	24
Albania	1198	2745
Americans traveling Europe.	366	401
Andorra	366	636
Austria	39953	3227
A. VEGETERIANS-EUROPE	244	68
Backpacking Europe in Summer 2010	50	28
Balkan mafia :)	1464	4522
Baltic travel addicted - Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia	451	372
Basque Country - Euskal Herria	159	46
Belarus	8478	1775
Belgium	48109	11900
BeNeLux	120	98
BLACK SEA	129	87
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4277	1811
Brazilians and Portuguese speakers in Europe	19	5
Bulgaria	9481	4384

This complication is derived from:

- Letting users creating sub-groups within groups by themselves
- The search function only look for the ‘exact’ term of the group’s name, but not the content inside the group, metadata or tags.

(To prove this is true, I also tried to search for the same kind of information for Paris, which is a much bigger and popular touristic destination. It was equally difficult to find any tourism related information also.)

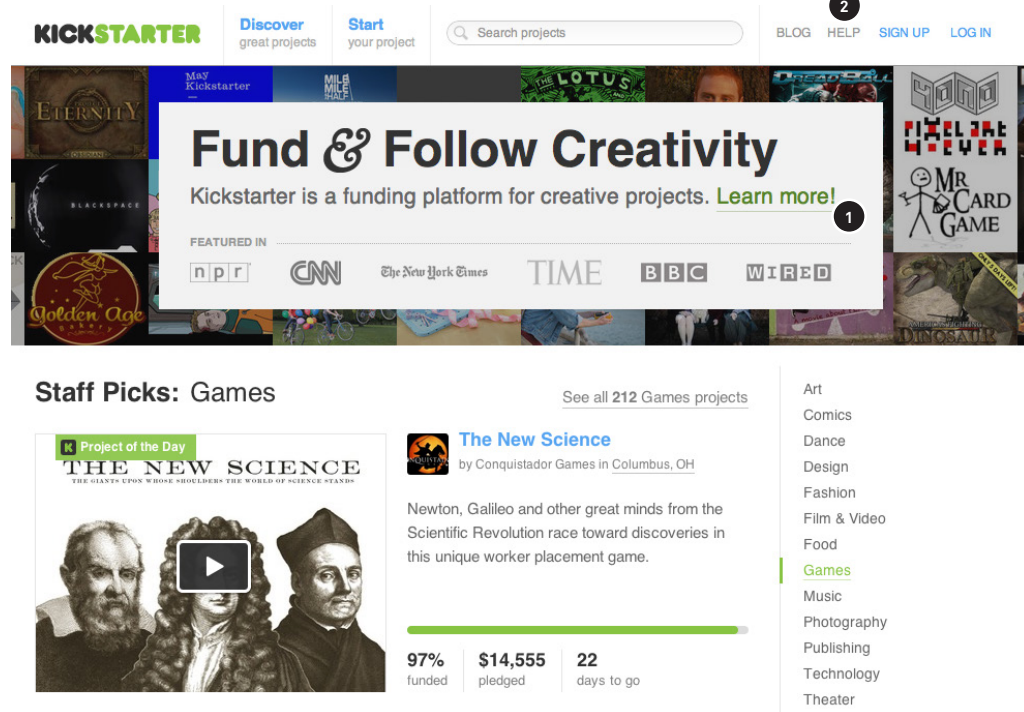
See all group members

Name	Mem	Post
AMERICAN SEEKS MUSICIANS/SINGERS 4 BUDDHIST ROCK OPERA TO PLAY IN CHINA	1	-
Bornholm	79	114
Central Jutland (Århus)	1837	4989
Cinema - Denmark	1	-
Copenhagen Capital Region	12725	34904
Danish CS Organisation	28	28
Denmark	1	-
Denmark Salsa Meeting	2	3
Denmark Yoga & Meditation	59	24
North Jutland	719	584
Odense + Fyn (the Funen Island)	664	1434
Ribe	0	-
Roskilde Festival 2012	111	118
South Jutland	199	41
Vejle-Kolding-Fredericia (Trekanten) and Horsens	172	247
Zealand (Sjælland)	125	18

Create a sub-group

## KICKSTARTER USABILITY WALKTHROUGH

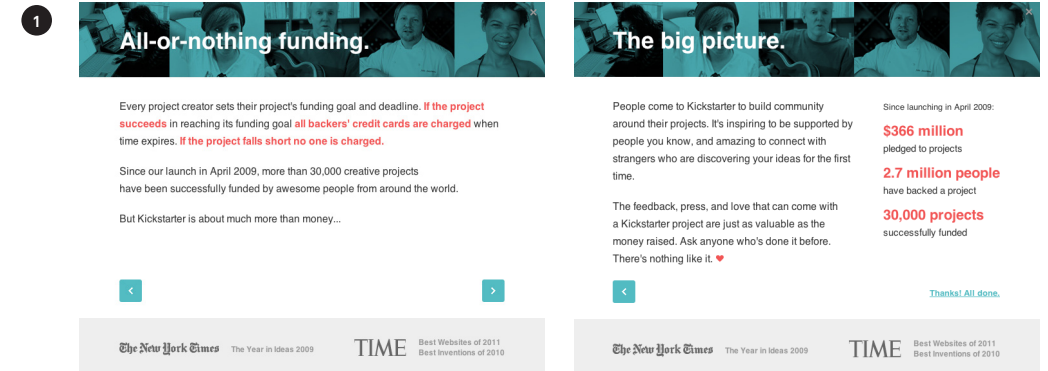
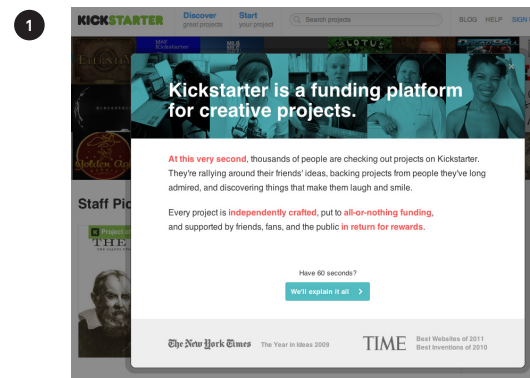
### TASK 1: Find out how to create a project on Kickstarter



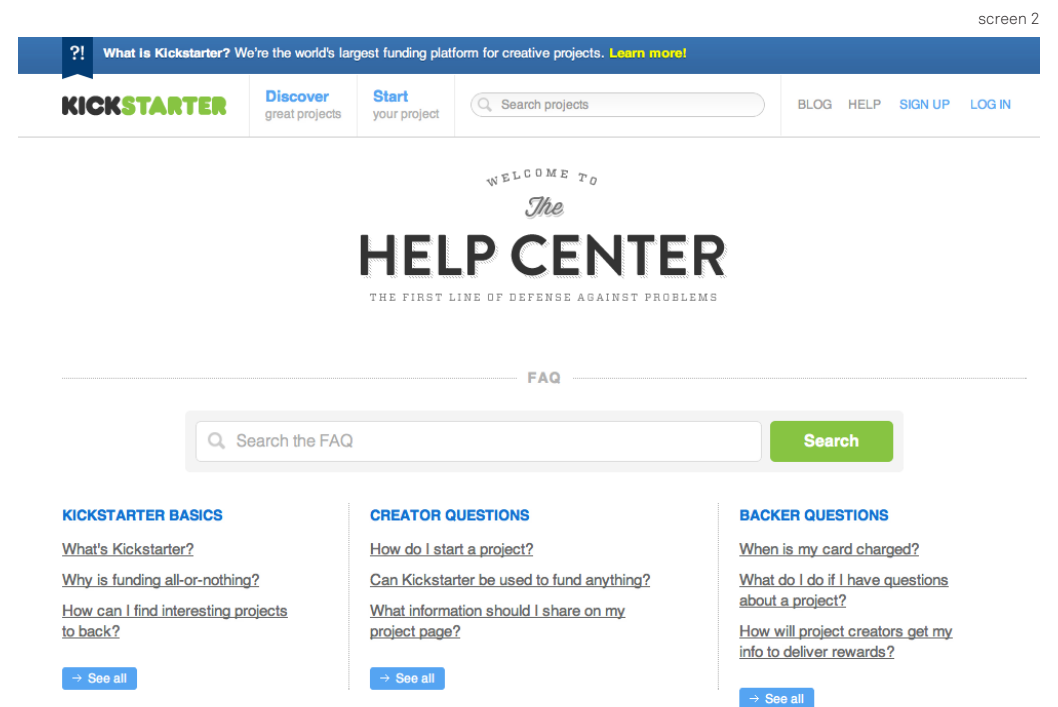
In the landing page, most eye-catching element is the banner on the top. Here, it explains what Kickstarter is in one sentence, with a link to learn more.

On the very top is the main navigation and below are project examples, either being picked by the staff, popular ones, projects by friend or curated pages.

Once clicks on 'Learn more!', a pop up appears to give further explanation to the user, with even options to read more (saying the information can be consumed within 1 minute.) This is well done with user's freedom/control in mind by not overburden him with too much information. The slides are manually controlled, not time-controlled so it gives user control to spend as much time reading as they would like to (unlike the banner in Skillshare or Autolib')



In order to specifically learn about creating a project in Kickstarter, the most obvious choice from the top navigation is 'Help'.



Once inside the 'Help' page, user has the choice to either search the FAQ or browse through 3 main topics. In this case, the user looks into 'Creator Questions' and choose 'How do I

start a project?' to start learning. It's worth to notice also that the language used here is basic enough to understand, with terms like 'creators' or 'backers' not too technical.

## FAQ

## Kickstarter Basics

Kickstarter 101  
Accountability  
Getting Involved  
Profile Settings

## Creator Questions

Before your project  
During your project  
After your project  
Payments  
Troubleshooting

## Backer Questions

Backing a project  
Getting Rewards  
Troubleshooting

## Kickstarter School

## Guidelines

## Style Guide

## Stats

## How do I start a project?

Click the green "Start Your Project" button on the [Start Page](#). That will take you through the process of building your project. All projects must meet Kickstarter's [project guidelines](#) and all creators must meet Amazon Payments' [eligibility requirements](#).

## Who is eligible to start a Kickstarter project?

To be eligible to start a Kickstarter project, you need to satisfy the requirements of Amazon Payments:

- You are 18 years of age or older.\*
- You are a permanent US resident with a Social Security Number (or EIN).
- You have a US address, US bank account, and US state-issued ID (driver's license).
- You have a major US credit or debit card.

\*Parents and teachers can launch projects in collaboration with children under 18 only if the adult registers for the Kickstarter and Amazon accounts and is in charge of running the project itself.

## Is an Amazon Payments account required to launch a project?

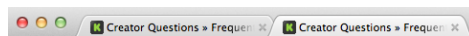
It is. We'll send you to Amazon to set up your account when you start your first project. For Amazon Payments questions, please visit [this section of the FAQ](#).

## How does the project review process work?

When someone has finished building their project, they submit it to Kickstarter and we check to make sure it doesn't violate our [project guidelines](#). A project is either approved or declined, and in some cases we'll reach out with a question asking for clarification. The creator has the ability to appeal a decline if they wish. Approximately 75% of submitted projects are accepted. The rest don't meet the guidelines.

The user is then taken to the main content of the FAQ page. The navigation is very well done, with all the content presented on the left-hand side. Navigation within the topic does not require a refresh, as it will simply scroll to the content on the right-hand side. Even with refresh, it is done relatively fast since everything is text-based. A link may be presented for user to read additional related content, and if that is the case, a new browser tab is open so that he can simply switch between the two tabs without losing track of what was being read.

When a new tab is open, there is a highlighted background which will slowly fades to remind the user that this is the additional information he chose to read.



## KICKSTARTER

404

## OH MY GOODNESS

We apologize but something's gone wrong — an old link, a bad link, or some little glitch.

Thankfully everyone is still safe.

Would you like to: [Go Back](#) or [Go to Home Page?](#)

## FAQ

## Kickstarter School

## Defining Your Project

Creating Rewards

Setting Your Goal

Making Your Video

Building Your Project

Promoting Your Project

Project Updates

Reward Fulfillment

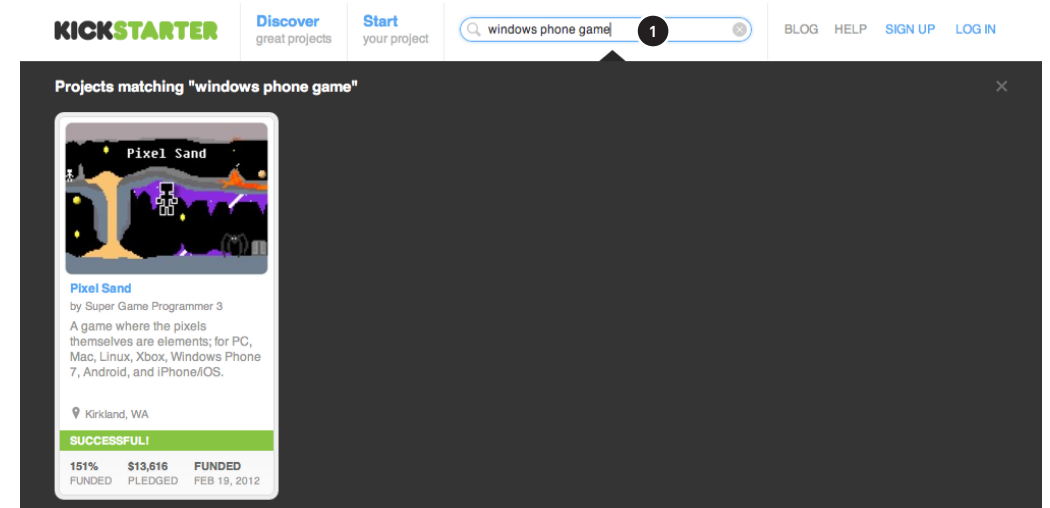
## Guidelines

## Style Guide

If a link is broken, an error message appears with clear choices how to proceed.

There is a little redundancy about the topic category. The 'Kickstarter School' should contain all the content specifically how to create a successful project, but then there's a completely different section titled 'Guidelines' which is the rule of thumb what kind of projects are and are not accepted by the Kickstarter HQ. So, in all three of FAQ, Kickstarter School and Guidelines contain bits of informations for creating a new project from a different aspect. These contents are linked through additional information links, but I still think it could have been better managed and categorized to make it even more concise and efficient. This is a very minor detail, however.

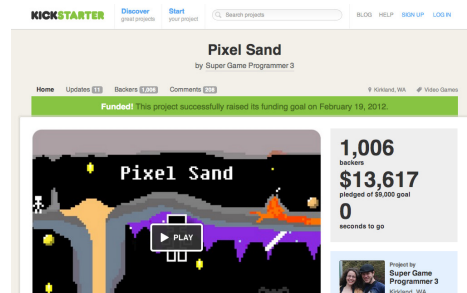
## TASK 2: Backing an interesting game project



1 By simply typing inquiries in the search bar on the top, projects automatically appear in project thumbnails. If there are many found

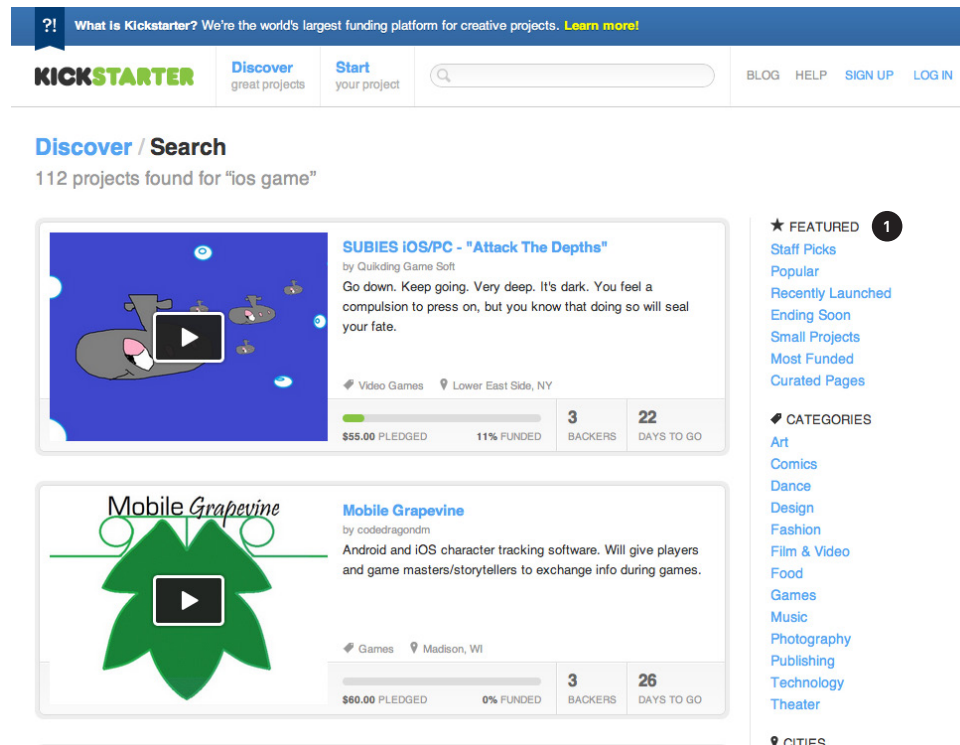
results, a button at the end will link to all results from that inquired term.





In the case of 'Windows Phone Game', there yields only one search result. But that particular project is already completed and funded, so there is no more option to back it.

screen 4

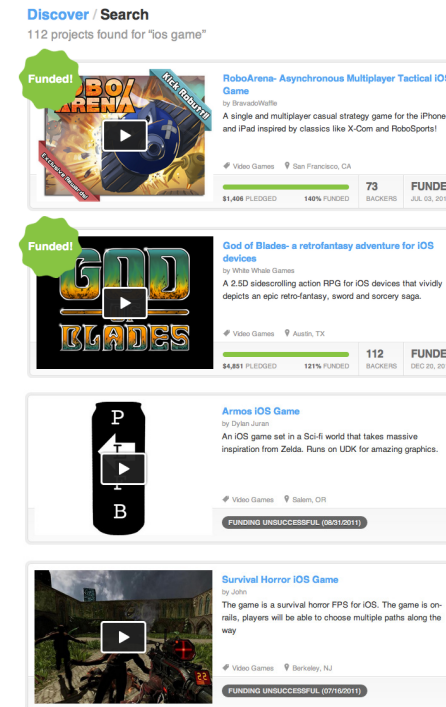


Changing the search term to "ios game" proves more popular with 112 results. Above is the screenshot of when 'show all results' button

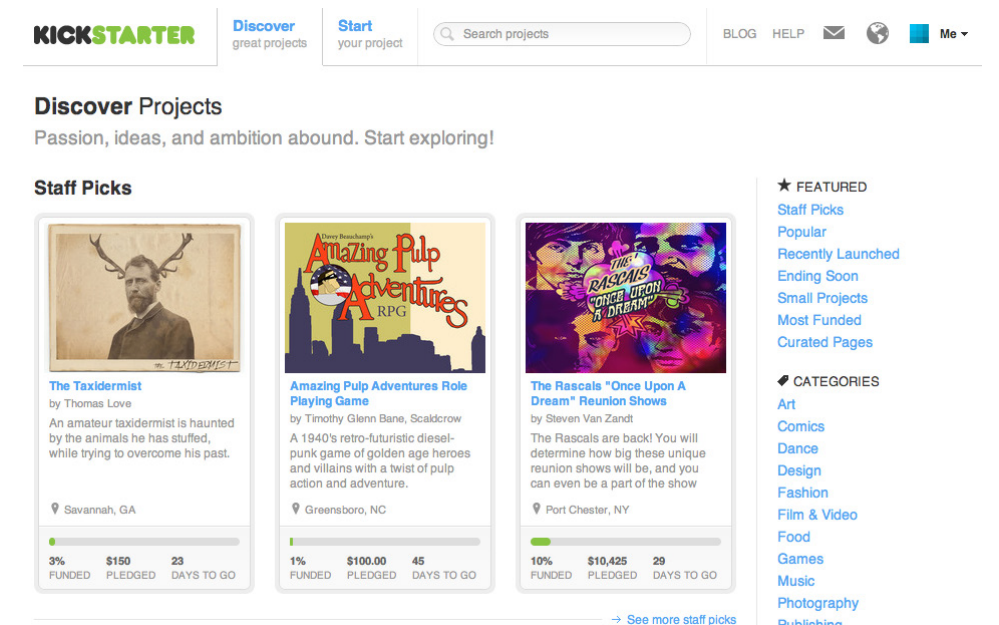
- While looking at the searched results, there also is other categories on the right, which when clicked, will dismiss all the search results. This mean I can not combine search results together with category, for example,

is clicked. This page displays all the 112 results in separate pages. This is where things get really confusing.

search for 'ios game' that are also 'Staff Picks', which would make more sense. Instead, narrowing down the search for finding a particular project cam be very tedious.



screen 5



To make matters worse, when going through the pages in search result, user will start to realize there is no logic in how these projects are displayed. The first projects showing up seems to be the uncompleted project (but in no particular order—as it should be that the projects that are ending sooner should be presented first), followed by successfully funded projects, then by unsuccessfully funded projects. So by using search, the results show all ongoing, past + successful and past + unsuccessful projects altogether. And user has no control whatsoever to order how they appear or filters out results that he is not interested in.

- ★ FEATURED
  - Staff Picks
  - Popular
  - Recently Launched
  - Ending Soon
  - Small Projects
  - Most Funded
  - Curated Pages
- 🔖 CATEGORIES
  - Art
  - Comics
  - Dance
  - Design
  - Fashion
  - Film & Video
  - Food
  - Games
  - Music
  - Photography
  - Publishing
  - Technology
  - Theater

Trying to find any particular interesting project through browsing is not any easier. Using the filtering on the right-hand side can be confusing and unclear. For example, clicking ‘Staff Picks’ will show ALL projects that are picked by staffs in ALL categories (Art, Comics, Dance...) with no option to filter. Then choosing one of the categories, for example, ‘Art’ will display a further option to sort further by ‘Staff Picks’, ‘Popular Projects’, ‘Recently Successfully Funded’ or ‘Most Funded’. It makes one wonder that, if a project does not fit into one of these categories then they will not show up at all in browsing? Somehow a feeling that you can not see ALL the projects possible can make the user be suspicious about Kickstarter biased standard. An unpopular project will keep being unpopular because there is little chance it will fit in one of these ‘categories’.

screen 6

# Tribal Hunger - Indie iOS for Casual & Hardcore Gamers

by Tribitech

[Home](#) [Updates 0](#) [Backers 34](#) [Comments 0](#)

Baltimore, MD Games



34backers

\$1,760pledged of \$10,000 goal

13days to go

1

Back This Project

\$1 minimum pledge

This project will only be funded if at least \$10,000 is pledged by Monday Oct 8, 1:32pm EDT. [How Kickstarter works.](#)

Project by Tribitech

Baltimore, MD

Contact me

First created · 1 backed

Brandon Eddy (437 friends)

Like

76 people like this.

Tweet

Embed

<http://kck.st/M8dyf>

A new take on classic Bullet Hell style arcade games. From the

Launched: Aug 9, 2012

198

1 When a project is found that the user feels like backing, the process becomes relatively simple and easy. Each projects homepage is very clear and well designed. The top shows the project’s title with the creator’s name just under. Below, a tab represent different informations regarding the project: ‘Home’ shows the content published by the creator about the project details, status and rewards; ‘Updates’ acts like a blog for the creator to communicate with his backer; ‘Backers’ display all the users who

backed this project so far; and ‘Comments’ are like a small forum that backers and creator can use for direct communications or simply leaving comments.

Within ‘Home’, the majority of the space on the left hand column is dedicated to the project’s video. This is where the creator communicates with potential backers, mostly on who they are, what is this project about, and why should people back this project.

2

Pledge \$1 or more

4 Backers

A personalized thank you video on our youtube channel and your name listed in our credits as a backer

Estimated delivery: Nov 2012

Pledge \$5 or more

10 Backers

All previous awards + a free copy of the game

Estimated delivery: May 2013

Pledge \$15 or more

8 Backers

All previous awards + Vote for the Title of the Game!

Estimated delivery: May 2013

Pledge \$50 or more

5 Backers

Below the project’s funding status is the list of ‘rewards’ backers will receive when backing the project at different prices. Clicking on one of these rewards will also conveniently directs user to the payment page.

199



# Tribal Hunger - Indie iOS for Casual & Hardcore Gamers

by Tribitech

## Alrighty!

Enter your pledge amount

\$

2

It's up to you.  
Any amount of \$1 or more.

Select your reward

☐ No Reward

No thanks, I just want to help the project.

☐ \$1 +

A personalized thank you video on our youtube channel and your name listed in our credits as a backer  
Estimated delivery: Nov 2012

☐ \$5 +

All previous awards + a free copy of the game  
Estimated delivery: May 2013

**IMPORTANT**

Kickstarter does not guarantee projects or investigate a creator's ability to complete their project. It is the responsibility of the project creator to complete their project as promised, and the claims of this project are theirs alone. [Learn more.](#)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- ▶ How do I pledge? **1**
- ▶ When is my credit card charged?
- ▶ So I'm only charged if funding succeeds?
- ▶ What if I want to change my pledge?
- ▶ If this project is funded, how do I get my reward?

amazonpayments

VISA AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

1 The payment page comes with a Kickstarter logo and large project's title on the top, to remind the user that he is paying for the right project. On the left is the payment panel and

2

Sorry, you must pledge at least \$100.00 to select that reward.

\$ 50.00

## KICKSTARTER

Log In

Please log in to continue.

EMAIL

PASSWORD

Remember me

Log me in!

New to Kickstarter?

A Kickstarter account is required to continue.

NAME

EMAIL

RE-ENTER EMAIL

PASSWORD

RE-ENTER PASSWORD

Discover new projects with our weekly newsletter

By signing up, you agree to our [terms of use](#).

Sign me up!

Log in with Facebook

It's fast and easy.

Log in with Facebook

Don't want to post anything without your permission.

on the right is other important information, with information-on-demand being available without having to leave the page

The amount entered in the top will have to be equivalent or more than the reward selected, otherwise a warning message will appear and ask the user to input again accordingly.

After clicking 'Continue', the user is forced to register with Kickstarter to back the project. This step may be off-putting to some, and I personally can't see the reason why one has to register with Kickstarter to simply back a project. It makes more sense to be compulsory when creating a project.

## KICKSTARTER

### Tribal Hunger - Indie iOS for Casual & Hardcore Gamers

by Tribitech

Check out with Amazon

Don't have an Amazon account? Just select "I am a new customer" on the next page.

PLEDGE AMOUNT

\$5.00

USE

SELECTED REWARD

PLEDGE \$5 OR MORE

All previous awards + a free copy of the game

Estimated delivery: May 2013

REWARDS/FUNDING

VISA AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

Continue to Amazon

**IMPORTANT**

Kickstarter does not guarantee projects or investigate a creator's ability to complete their project. It is the responsibility of the project creator to complete their project as promised, and the claims of this project are theirs alone. [Learn more.](#)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- ▶ When is my credit card charged?
- ▶ So I'm only charged if funding succeeds?
- ▶ What if I want to change my pledge?
- ▶ If this project is funded, how do I get my reward?

## KICKSTARTER

### amazonpayments

Sign in with your Amazon account

What is your e-mail address?

My e-mail address is:

Do you have an Amazon.com password?

☐ I am a new customer.

☐ I am a returning customer, and my password is:

Sign in using an Amazon account

Forgot your password?

Has your e-mail address changed?

**About Amazon.com Sign In**

Amazon.com Sign In allows you to log in to applications that use Amazon technology using your Amazon.com account. To protect your information, you should only enter your Amazon.com e-mail address and password into a web site if the address of the site starts with <http://www.amazon.com> (note your browser address bar to check this). You can find out about how your personal information is protected in our [Privacy Notice](#).

[User Agreement/Privacy Notice](#) [Amazon Payments Privacy Notice](#) [Global Amazon.com, Inc. © 1996-2014](#)

After registration is complete, a payment review page appears to let the user go through all the details before making the actual payment.

User is then re-directed to Amazon Payment page to make final payment, with the Kick-starter logo still on the top left to remind the user he is still in the same process.

### TASK 3: Creating a project

## KICKSTARTER

[Discover great projects](#)[Start your project](#)

Search projects

Blog Help

Me

We help people fund creative projects.

Kickstarter is the world's largest funding platform for creative projects. Every week, tens of thousands of amazing people pledge millions of dollars to projects from the worlds of **music, film, art, technology, design, food, publishing** and other creative fields.

Start your project

How to make an Amazon.com Kickstart

Each and every Kickstarter project is the independent creation of someone like you!

HOW KICKSTARTER WORKS

Once choosing 'Start your project' from the top main navigation, user is directed to the start project landing page, with a brief introductory text on the left about projects and a video about individual creators on the right. Scrolled down below shows more text about 'How Kickstarter Works' with quotes from various well-known press. This below section can be misunderstood as a footnote and does not really invite users to read it for too heavy text. A link to the help section would suffice.

## KICKSTARTER

[Help](#)[William Trade](#)[Not you?](#)

Guidelines

### These are the Project Guidelines.

All projects must meet the guidelines to launch, so please read them carefully.

Kickstarter is a funding platform for creative projects — everything from traditional forms of art (like theater and music) to contemporary forms (like design and games). These guidelines explain Kickstarter's focus. Projects violating these guidelines will not be allowed to launch.

Note that as you go through the site you may find past projects on Kickstarter that conflict with these rules. We're making heads or we're making tails. Thanks for reading!

Here are some guidelines that you should follow:

- 1. Funding for projects only.**

A project has a clear goal: the making of an album, a book, or a work of art. A project will eventually be completed, and something will be produced by it. A project is not open-ended. Starting a business, for example, does not qualify as a project.
- 2. Projects must fit Kickstarter's categories.**

We currently support projects in the categories of Art, Comics, Dance, Design, Fashion, Film, Food, Games, Music, Photography, Publishing, Technology, and Theater.

**Design and Technology projects have additional guidelines.** If your project is in either of these categories, be sure to review them carefully.

[View Design and Technology requirements](#)
- 3. Prohibited uses:**

No charity or cause funding.

Examples of prohibited use include raising money for the Red Cross, funding an awareness campaign, funding a scholarship, or promoting the donation of funds raised, or future profits, to a charity or cause.

**Eligibility requirements**

To be eligible to start a Kickstarter project, you need to satisfy the requirements of Amazon Payments:

- You are 18 years of age or older.
- You are a permanent US resident with a Social Security Number (or EIN).
- You have a US address, US bank account, and US state-issued ID (driver's license).
- You have a major US credit or debit card.

Already logged in from backing a project, when clicked 'Start a new project' button, the signing up process is skipped then user is taken to project guideline and agreement. After the agreement, a project creation process begins.

**KICKSTARTER** [HELP](#) William Toads · not you?

[Guidelines](#) **Basics** Rewards Story About you Account Review **2** Preview **3**

Want to get a head start? Amazon Payments verification can take up to 7 days, so [visit your Account section](#) to get the ball rolling. [Dismiss](#) **1**

## Meet your new project.

Start by giving it a name, a pic, and other important details.

**Project Image**

Choose an image from your computer

JPEG, PNG, GIF, or BMP • 10MB file limit  
At least 640x480 pixels • 4:3 aspect ratio

How to:  
[Make an awesome project](#)

**Project title**

Your project title should be simple, specific, and memorable, and it should include the title of the creative project you're raising funds for. Avoid words like "help," "support," or "fund."

**Category**

**Short blurb**

The project creation process is very well done concerning usability. On the top, there is a navigation tool which user can shuffle through without even having to fill in information in any of them, for example, he can go ahead and jump to 'Story' section before having to fill in information in previous steps.

This gives the user so much feeling of control and can gasp the overall feeling on what is required to be put in beforehand.

Below in each section also presents a 'Next' and 'Back' button for those who don't notice that the bar on the top can be used for navigation.

**1** A warning (or suggesting) message appears in clear distinction but without annoyance, and can be easily dismissed.

**KICKSTARTER** [HELP](#) William Toads · not you?

[Guidelines](#) [Basics](#) [Rewards](#) [Story](#) [About you](#) [Account](#) [Review](#) **2** [Preview](#) **3**

Want to get a head start? Amazon Payments verification can take up to 7 days, so [visit your Account section](#) to get the ball rolling. [Dismiss](#)

## The homestretch!

Once everything is in place, submit your project for review.

**Before you submit**

Make sure you have:

- Clearly explained what you're raising funds to do.
- Added a video to the best way to connect with your backers.
- Created a series of well-priced, fun rewards. (No just thank-yous!)
- Previewed your project and gotten feedback from a friend.
- Checked out other projects on Kickstarter and backed one to get a feel for the experience.

**After you submit**

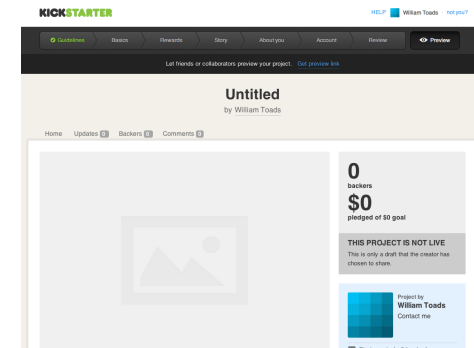
Once you've done everything listed above and submitted your project for review:

- Your project will be reviewed to ensure it meets the Project Guidelines.
- Within a few days, we'll send you a message about the status of your project.
- If approved, you can launch whenever you're ready.

[Back](#) [Preview & submit](#) [Delete project](#) [Exit](#)

On the 'Review' tab, user can chose to 'Preview & submit' the project (which the button appears instead of 'Next')

3



Or he can even view the project in preview mode beforehand to stimulate how everything will look like when somebody visits his project page, once completed.

## CRAIGSLIST USABILITY WALKTHROUGH

## TASK 1: Try to find used iPhone 4S

screen 1

The screenshot shows the Craigslist SF Bay Area homepage. The left sidebar contains navigation links like 'post to classifieds', 'my account', 'search craigslist', and an 'event calendar'. The main content area is divided into several categories: 'community', 'housing', 'jobs', 'personals', 'discussion forums', 'services', and 'gigs'. The 'housing' section is highlighted with a red circle and the number 1. The right sidebar shows a 'nearby cities' list.

The Craigslist landing page is divided into four areas: The left-side contains the navigational menus; on the top indicates which local Craigslist user is in together with its sub-group (in this case: SF bay area, which corresponds the URL-sfbay.craigslist.org/), which is well done since it automatically directs user to his local area site by IP detection (and because

- 1 To identify what user wants, in this case, a used iPhone, is particularly easy. The resources in main categories are divided in such a way that well covers almost all aspects-products and services-one may need in life. Under each, sub-

Craigslist is about local community and exchanging resources within); on the bottom (which takes up the most area) displays lists of resources within the local, divided into categories; and lastly on the right (which is the least used) is the language menu and navigation to other Craigslist local websites.

categories are listed alphabetically, making it easy to navigate and the language used is very simple. In this case, it took the user less than half a minute to locate 'cell phones' under 'for sale'.

The screenshot shows the search results for 'cell phones' in the San Francisco area. The search bar at the top shows 'cell phones' and 'by-owner'. The results list various iPhone models and their prices. The search bar is highlighted with a red circle and the number 2.

The screenshot shows the search bar at the top of the Craigslist page. The search bar contains the text 'CL > SF bay area craigslist > city of san francisco > for sale'. The search bar is highlighted with a red circle and the number 1.

- 2 By typing 'iPhone 4S' in 'search for:' bar, a set of results appear that match what the user wants.

- 3 Here, there is also an option to 'show images' which will show each post's thumbnail, and how to sort the posts. This gives user's the control to chose to see what they want. Sometimes

Once inside 'cell phone', on top of the page, user is reminded where he is now in the web with breadcrumb navigation. User can then further refine the location of the search, in this case, he will choose "San Francisco", as it is where he lives. Down below, he can also define how the phone is sold: is it by owner, by dealer or both. He chose 'by owner' because he wants a used one. The whole process is simple and intuitive.

with slow connections, displaying image might be a bad option, or that without images, more results can be displayed in the list. It is very considerate to have this option, in my opinion.

SF bay area craigslist > san francisco > for sale / wanted > cell phones - by owner

Avoid scams and fraud by dealing locally! Beware any deal involving Western Union, Moneygram, wire transfer, cashier check, money order, shipping, escrow, or any promise of transaction protection/certification/guarantee.

## Mint condition unlocked black iPhone 4S 16GB - \$400 (SOMA / south beach)

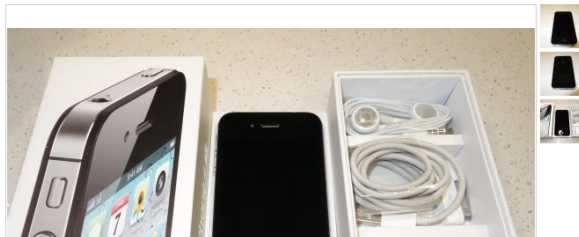
Date: 2012-09-20, 11:59PM PDT

Reply to this post: [x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org](mailto:x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org) [\[Errors when replying to ads?\]](#)

I'm selling my iPhone 4S. It is jailbroken and unlocked, so it will work on any GSM carrier. In the US, it will work on AT&T, T-Mobile, MetroPCS etc.

The phone is in great condition. Only very minor surface scratches that aren't noticeable. It comes with the original box and cables (headphones have never even been unwrapped).

Price is firm, cash-only, and in-person.



When clicked into one of the posts, user is presented with the textual and image information.

**1**

**craigslist**  
online community

**about > scams**

Personal Safety Tips [craigslist help forum](#)

You can sidestep would-be scammers by following these common-sense rules when:

- **DEAL LOCALLY WITH FOLKS YOU CAN MEET IN PERSON** - follow
- NEVER WIRE FUNDS VIA WESTERN UNION, MONEYGRAM or any likely a scammer.
- **FAKE CASHIER CHECKS & MONEY ORDERS ARE COMMON**, and YOU RESPONSIBLE when the fake is discovered weeks later.
- **CRAIGSLIST IS NOT INVOLVED IN ANY TRANSACTION**, and does not escrow services, or offer "buyer protection" or "seller certification"
- **NEVER GIVE OUT FINANCIAL INFORMATION** (bank account number)
- **AVOID DEALS INVOLVING SHIPPING OR ESCROW SERVICES** and "GUARANTEE" YOUR TRANSACTION.
- **DO NOT RENT HOUSING WITHOUT SEEING THE INTERIOR**, OR: - in all likelihood that housing unit is not actually for rent and that cheap item
- **DO NOT SUBMIT TO CREDIT CHECKS OR BACKGROUND CHECKS** HAVE MET THE INTERVIEWER OR LANDLORD/AGENT IN PERSON.

**2**

Date: 2012-09-20, 11:59PM PDT

Reply to this post: [x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org](mailto:x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org) [\[Errors when replying to ads?\]](#)

**Use Default Email**

[x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org](mailto:x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org) unlocked, so it will work on any GSM carrier. In the US, it will work on AT&T, T-Mobile, MetroPCS etc.

**Reply Using Webmail**

GMail  
 Yahoo Mail  
 Hotmail or Live Mail  
 AOL Mail

**Copy and paste into your email**

[x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org](mailto:x6txp-3286109106@sale.craigslist.org)

On the top, a warning text is clearly distinguished by using yellow background and a link to learn more information about scams. This is very useful even for experienced users, as one can never be too cautious when dealing with online trading.

Only button is available to take action, which is 'Reply to this post' at the top. This is a little obscure and hard to spot, perhaps a change of colour or size can improve visibility. When clicked, it presents user with a list of actions to take, which is very useful and does not take it for granted which method user may prefer the most. Also, by only responding to email, the post is kept clean without unnecessary comments, and communication becomes private. It also proves effective to avoid spamming by using specific encrypted mail address.

## TASK 2: Post a classified finding a roommate

**craigslist**

post to classifieds **1**  
my account

search craigslist

for sale  >

**SF bay area** [w](#) [slc](#) [sby](#) [eby](#) [pen](#) [nby](#) [scz](#)

**community**

activities lost+found  
artists musicians  
childcare local news  
general politics  
groups rideshare  
pets volunteers

**housing**

apts / housing  
rooms / shared  
sublets / temporary  
housing wanted  
housing swap  
vacation rentals

**jobs**

accounting+finance  
admin / office  
arch / engineering  
art / media / design  
biotech / science  
business / mgmt

**nearby cities**

bakersfield  
chico  
fresno  
gold country  
hanford  
humboldt  
inland empire  
klamath falls  
las vegas

**1** The menu "post to classified" is clearly visible and is the top priority under Craigslist logo.

It is clear that second emphasis from finding resources is to post to the classified.

SF bay area craigslist > choose type

[log in to your account](#)  
[\(Apply for Account\)](#)

Please post to a single geographic area and category only -- cross-posting to multiple cities or categories is not allowed

What type of posting is this:

- ☐ job offered  
☐ resume / job wanted
- ☐ housing offered  
☐ housing wanted
- ☐ for sale (please do not post prohibited [UI](#) or recalled [UI](#) items)  
☐ item wanted
- ☐ gig offered (I'm hiring for a short-term, small or odd job)  
☐ service offered
- ☐ personal / romance
- ☐ community  
☐ event

[Continue](#)

The user then needs to specify what kind of posting he is making. The categories are very clearly defined, identical to the resources category from the main page. In this case, 'housing offered' is chosen.

After that, the process is straightforward.

SF bay area craigslist > san francisco > housing > rooms & shares

Rent: \$  SqFt:  Posting Title:

Reply to:  Your email address  Type email address again

☐ show ☐ hide ☒ anonymize (your email will show as: xxxxx-xxxxx)

Posting Description:

FORMAT: mobile tablet regular

## about > anonymize

### How does it work?

You can choose to anonymize your email address when posting to craigslist.

If you select this option, the posting will display a craigslist email address:

Whenever a technical term is presented, like 'anonymize' seen here, immediately there's a link to explanation what this all means.



## SF bay area craigslist > san francisco > housing > rooms & shares > create posting

Just like in finding resource, a breadcrumb navigation is always visible on top, however, looks slightly different. More consistency would have been better.

### Email Address Verification

#### IMPORTANT - FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE YOUR REQUEST !!!

You should receive an email shortly, with a link to:

- publish your ad
- edit (or confirm an edit to) your ad
- verify your email address
- delete your ad

Email sent to: [graphicaffairs@gmail.com](mailto:graphicaffairs@gmail.com)

If you don't receive this email, please consult our [help pages](#)

Your email provider might misfile this mail as spam. [Check your spam folders.](#)

A warning message is clearly presented with actions to take. In this case, an email activation is needed (to prove that the input email is valid,

Thanks for posting with us, we really appreciate it!

- Your posting can be seen at <http://helsinki.fi.craigslist.fi/mob/3286445772.html>
- [Manage your ad](#)

and that there's a way for other users to contact the poster.) Help is clearly provided should problems arise.

After posting, confirmation message appears to let user knows he has completed his task.

## TASK 3: Find discussions and information about local vegetarian restaurants

screen 6

[help, faq, abuse, legal](#)  
[avoid scams & fraud](#)  
[personal safety tips](#)  
[terms of use](#)  
[system status](#)  
[about craigslist](#)  
[craigslist is hiring](#)  
[craigslist blog](#)  
[best-of-craigslist](#)  
[craigslist TV](#)  
["craigslist joe"](#)  
[craig connects](#)  
[progressive directory](#)  
[weather](#) [quake](#) [tide](#)

[misc romance](#)  
[casual encounters](#)  
[missed connections](#)  
[rants and raves](#)  
**[discussion forums](#)**  
1099 [gifts](#)  
apple [haiku](#)  
arts [health](#)  
atheist [psych](#)  
autos [history](#)  
beauty [housing](#)  
bikes [jobs](#)  
celebs [jokes](#)  
comp [kink](#)  
crafts [i.t.r.](#)  
diet [legal](#)  
divorce [linux](#)  
dying [loc pol](#)  
eco [m4m](#)  
educ [money](#)  
etiquet [motocy](#)  
feedback [music](#)  
film [npo](#)  
fitness [open](#)  
fixit [outdoor](#)

[bikes](#)  
[boats](#)  
[books](#)  
[business](#)  
[computer](#)  
[free](#)  
[furniture](#)  
[general](#)  
[jewelry](#)  
[materials](#)  
[rvs](#)  
[sporting](#)  
[tickets](#)  
[tools](#)  
[wanted](#)  
**[services](#)**  
beauty [automotive](#)  
creative [farm+garden](#)  
computer [household](#)  
cycle [labor/move](#)  
event [skill'd trade](#)  
financial [real estate](#)  
leagal [sm biz ads](#)

[beauty+hlth](#)  
[cars+trucks](#)  
[cds/dvd/vhs](#)  
[cell phones](#)  
[clothes+acc](#)  
[collectibles](#)  
[electronics](#)  
[farm+garden](#)  
[garage sale](#)  
[household](#)  
[motorcycles](#)  
[music instr](#)  
[photo+video](#)  
[toys+games](#)  
[video gaming](#)  
**[gigs](#)**  
crew [computer](#)  
event [creative](#)  
labor [domestic](#)

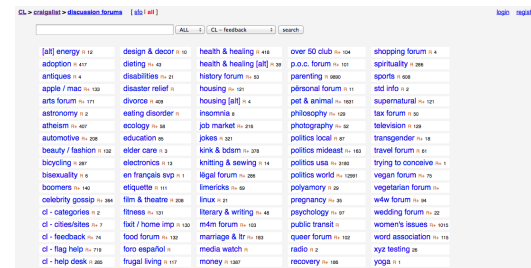
[manufacturing](#)  
[marketing / pr / ad](#)  
[medical / health](#)  
[nonprofit sector](#)  
[real estate](#)  
[retail / wholesale](#)  
[sales / biz dev](#)  
[salon / spa / fitness](#)  
[security](#)  
[skilled trade / craft](#)  
[software / qa / dba](#)  
[systems / network](#)  
[technical support](#)  
[transport](#)  
[tv / film / video](#)  
[web / info design](#)  
[writing / editing](#)  
[ ETC ]  
[ part-time ]

[reno](#)  
[roseburg](#)  
[sacramento](#)  
[san luis obispo](#)  
[santa barbara](#)  
[santa maria](#)  
[sf bay area](#)  
[siskiyou co](#)  
[stockton](#)  
[susanville](#)  
[ventura](#)  
[visalia-tulare](#)  
[yuba-sutter](#)  
[us cities](#)  
[us states](#)  
[canada](#)  
[cl worldwide](#)

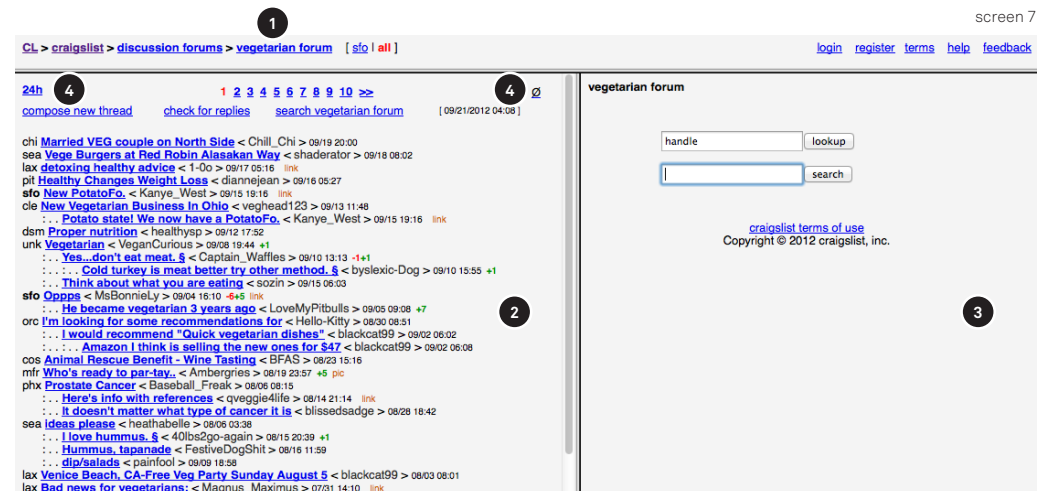
1 Under one of the resource's categories, 'discussion forum' is clearly listed, with some of the sub-categories presented. Since the user

cannot see the term 'vegetarian' he looks for, he chooses the 'discussion forum' link instead of one of the sub-categories.

Once inside, more sub-categories, or forums, are presented. Here, vegetarian is one of them. There are also some remarks behind each forum, with clear explanation at the bottom.



screen 7



After clicking the 'Vegetarian' forum, the user is led to a board where discussion regarding the topic happens.

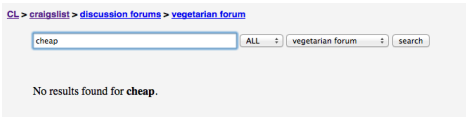
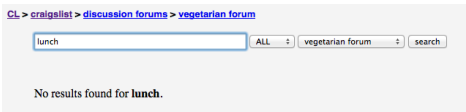
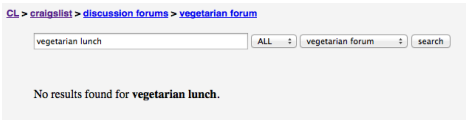
While the rest of the website is very simple and easy to use with almost no threshold, the forum seems to be complicated both layout-wise and language-wise.

The layout is divided into 3 main parts: 1 the top is the breadcrumb navigation with a choice to filter the forum to only within San Francisco area or from all area, and some

menus regarding user identification and other information; 2 on the left is where all the forum posts are; and on the right 3 is the 'look up' and 'search' functionality. But one a forum is chosen, the right side will change to displaying the content of each post, which is not very obvious for first-time users.

The dotted lines in relation between forums and posts within each one is rather ambiguous, it takes a while to understand the layer and relationship to which post is the answer of which one, under which forum.

3 The language between ‘look up’ and ‘search’ is not so clear. And when attempted with ‘lookup’, an error message occurs that a login is needed.



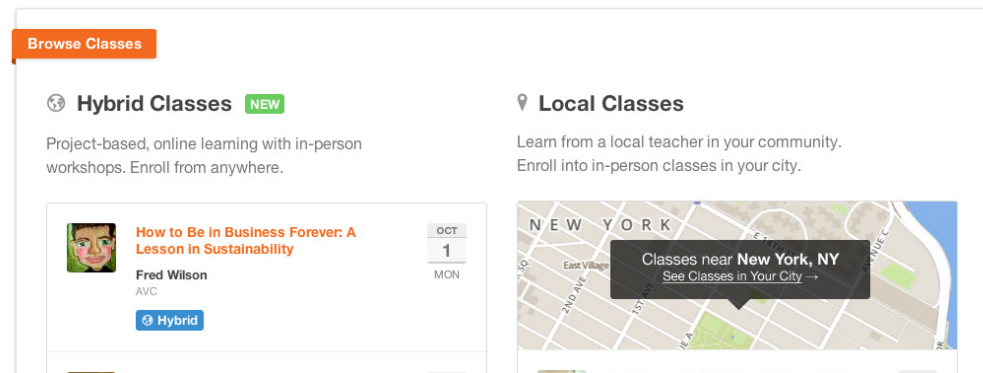
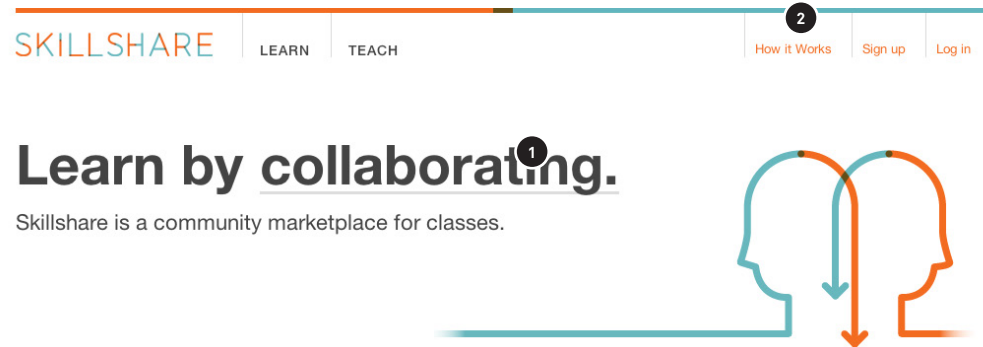
‘24H’ and Ø buttons are not so clear. 24H does not lead to anything and Ø basically changes the discussion forum to night mode, which does not exist anywhere else in the web.

Using ‘search’ and ‘look up’ are not particularly useful, as simple keywords do not yield any results.

At the end, user has to go through each posting one by one to find any relevant information he is looking for, which is not effective at all.

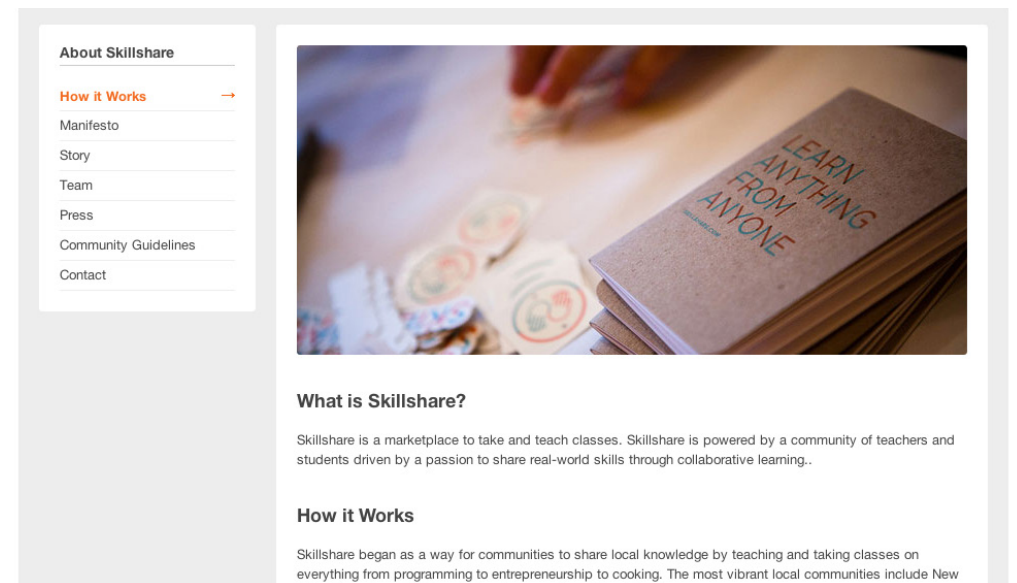
## TASK 1: Find out about Skillshare

screen 1



1 While the intention to introduce Skillshare to users by spaciouly allocating half of the landing page for introduction banner, the messages simply move too fast for anyone to read. There are a total of three slides (headline + sub-headline), each with its own illustration. There is too little time to read all information. Worst of all, there is no option to go back to the previous slides, or even repeating.

User is left with only the message from last slide: 'Learn by Collaborating: Skillshare is a community marketplace for classes', which can be considered adequate, but it just left him wondering what are the previous messages that just flew by. Having no other choice, he then easily locates 'How it Works' 2 link on the main navigation in the top right.

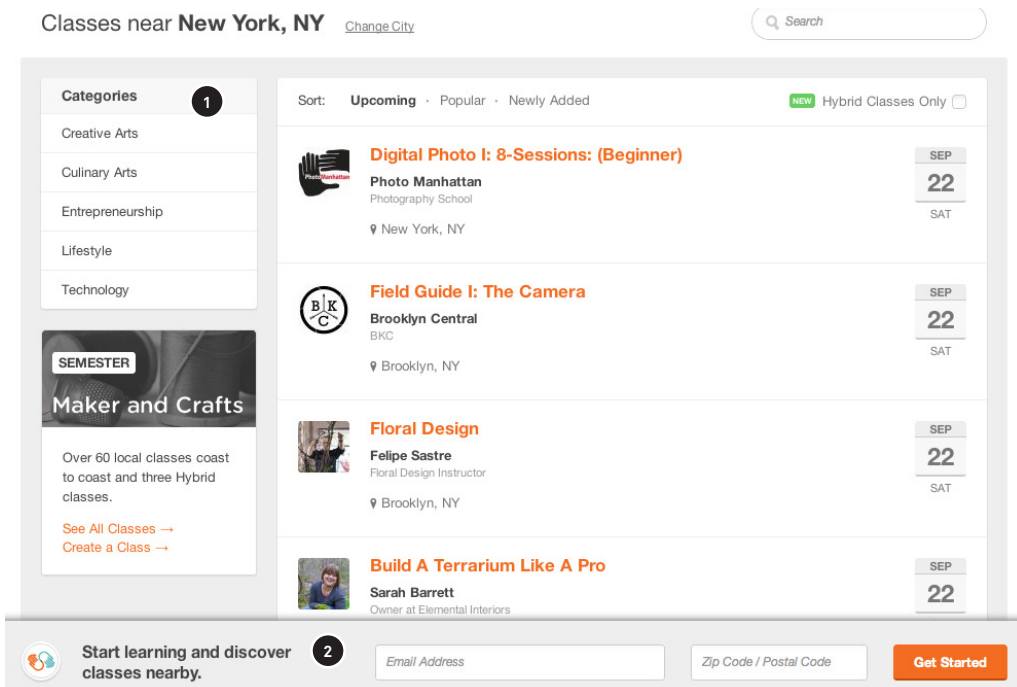


Once in 'How it Works', user sees he is now under the main section 'About Skillshare'. Without navigational indication, user can feel a little lost, which will be the case when using the service later on.

At this point, the information for 'How it works' is laid down nicely on the wide right column, with adequate information to understand the service's basic idea.

## TASK 2: Find and enrol for an Asian cooking class

screen 3



1 The categories are written in clear language. It is questionable, however, that there may be some classes that do not fall into one of these categories.

close to, in this case, New York city, NY. Judging by the layout, Skillshare would rather user use browsing to find desired class.

Categories

View all

Creative Arts

Culinary Arts

Baking


Cooking

Drinks

Service & Hosting

Other


Sort: Upcoming · Popularity




Wonton Thru

Tara Kirchner

Head of Marketing

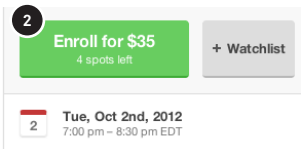
 New York, NY



The Ultimate

Fall

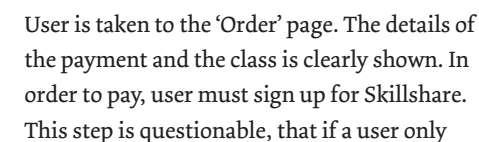
screen 4



1 Tabs are used navigate to different sets of detailed information. This is particularly well done because it does not require the browser to refresh the page as everything is already pre-loaded. However, the system could perhaps be better organized. They should all follow the same logic, but in reality each one of them is quite different from one another. The first

tab uses a letter symbol, the second normal text with icon symbol, the third with just normal text and the fourth, normal text with highlighted number. A redesign to [About] [Syllabus] [Teacher] and [Discussion] should be enough, and the star endorsement can be placed perhaps under the teacher's picture profile to relate the information together.

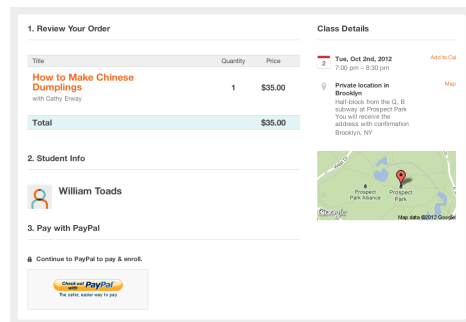
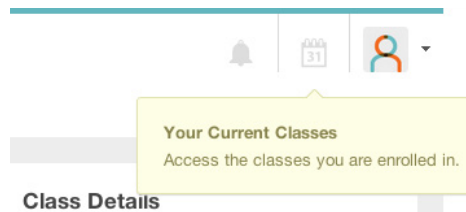
screen 5



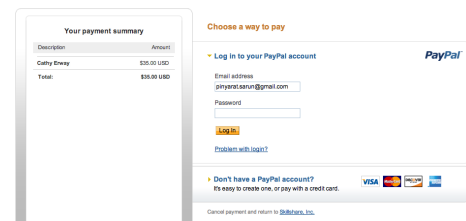
215



- 1 Here, the option to ‘sign up using your email address’ is almost invisible. This can create a confusion that user must have a Facebook account to join in, or questionable why would Skillshare try to force user to use their Face-



SKILLSHARE



book account to join in. (It is understandably easier to sign in with Facebook, but still the other option should not simply be hidden so much, compared to other case studies.)

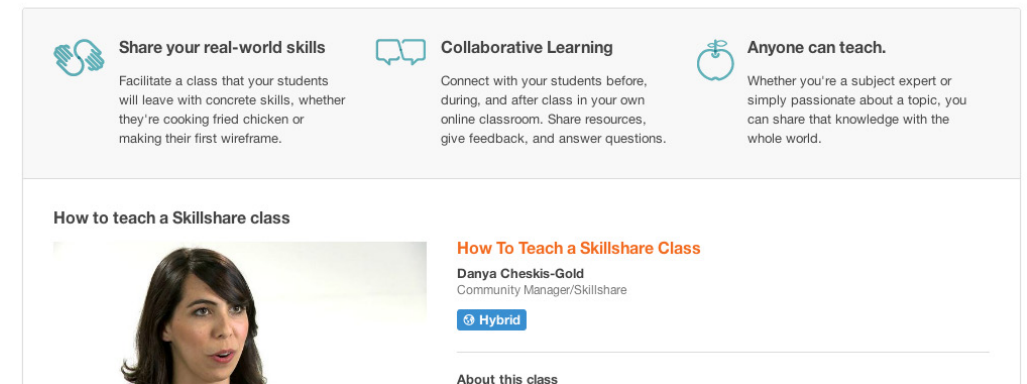
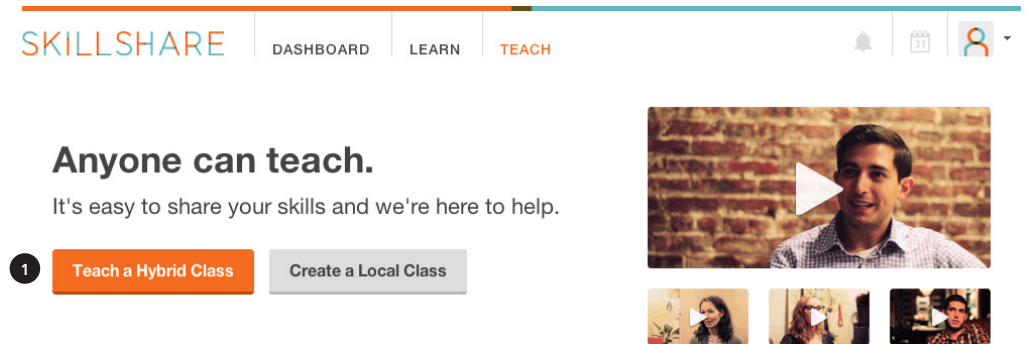
Once signed up (through whatever means), the top navigation will display extra icons relating to user's information, with a tooltip popup to explain what the calendar icon means, but nothing appears for the bell icon (also questionable why not equal treatment.)

User is then finally able to make a payment and enrol in the class. When Paypal button is clicked, it redirects user to the Paypal external page.

On PayPal page, a Skillshare logo is present, which is appropriate as it serves as a reminder what service the user is paying for. It would have been better if the class details are also presented here.

### TASK 3: Create own class for teaching

screen 6

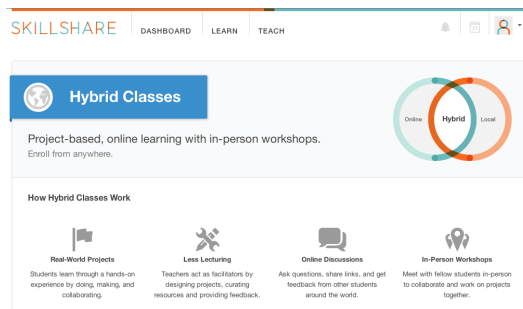


While the landing page for ‘Teach’ is very informative, it is anything but simple. Divided into 3 parts: on the top is the action area where user can choose to take action along with videos (with no explanation what kind of videos they are) on the right;

are some texts encouraging user to teach; and below is a special tutorial class to help users prepare or improve their classes. Again, the disorientation of information is shown here, where grouping is rather illogical.

- 1 The most serious problem here is how colour coding and language can play a part to user being misunderstood and misled. Why use different wording like ‘teach’ and ‘create’ when clearly the users would not have known the difference. What is a Hybrid class? A technical term is presented without an explanation (unless he has to click to read. This piece of information is written in ‘How it Works’ page, but user may not recall what it actually is. A reminder or explanatory tooltip would have made it more understandable, like in Craigslist

or Kickstarter)  
Color-coding also suggests that Skillshare would rather have users teaching Hybrid Class than creating a Local Class. The gray color of ‘Create a Local Class’ looks like the button is not clickable or represent a cancel button. If I have to guess, it is because Hybrid Class can host more students hence more profit to the Skillshare corporate. Usability should again, not be hindered or controlled by corporate’s agenda.



As expected, only when clicked on ‘Teach a Hybrid Class’, an explanation is shown. This page presents a few usability flaws as following:

- It is not in consistent design with the previous ‘Teach’ page, even though the information displayed is rather familiar (basic information, along with action button.) An improvement could be just to use same template to avoid confusion and improve consistency.
- Here, once user finds himself in the wrong place, a breadcrumb or other navigational indication of where he currently in the website can be vital.

The application page for hosting a Hybrid Class looks like it comes from a completely a different website, with different color-coding and typography.

screen 7

In order to complete the task, the user has to choose ‘Create a Local Class’, which will lead to a class creation process. This whole process,

- Graphical indication of how many steps the user has to take and where he is now, avoiding the feel of lost.

however, is very well designed and easy to understand, with sidebar to present help all the time.

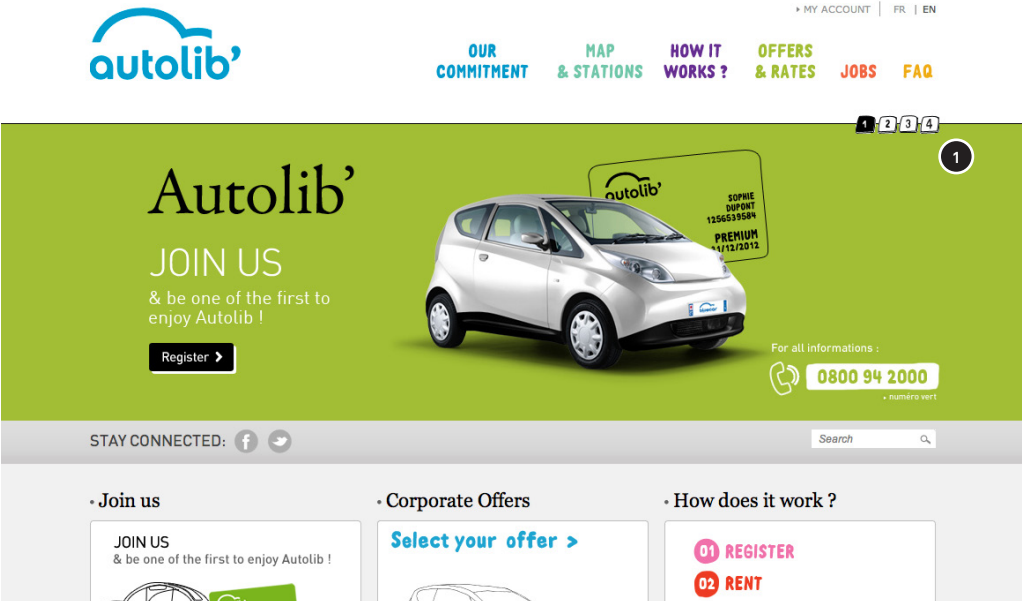
When a form is not completely filled out, a warning message appear appropriately next to the unfilled form.

After creating the class, a confirmation message correctly appears with an option available for the user to fill in the schedule to teach now or do it later.

A screenshot of a successfully created class. The layout is identical to a class detail when browsing. A confusing message appear on the top-right hand side when it says that ‘You’ve enrolled’ and an option to ‘Buy another ticket’ when it is actually a class that user just created and he will be teaching. Does not make much sense that user ‘enrolled’ in his own class and that he can buy a ticket for himself.

TASK 1: Find out about Autolib'

screen 1

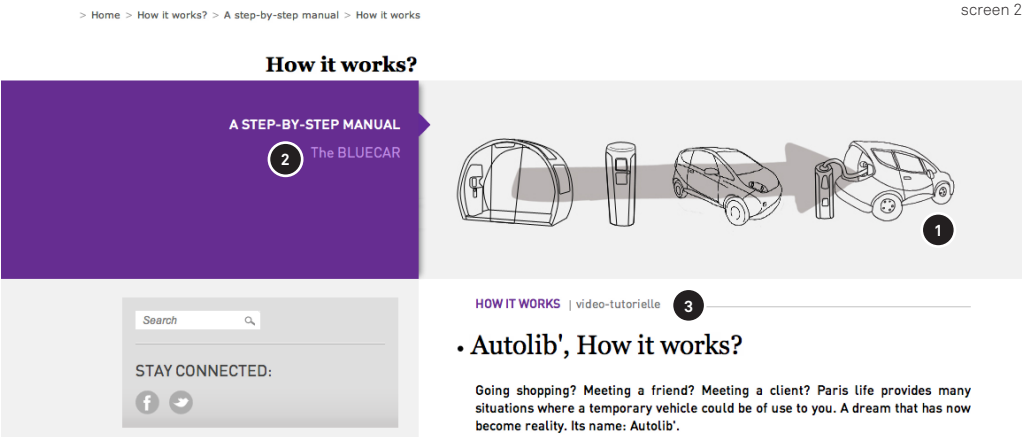


The landing page can be divided into 3 main areas: the main navigation on the top; the banner in the middle (which takes up the majority of the space); and three links to three areas in

Autolib' website below the banner. To find out more about Autolib', the most obvious action would be to click 'How It Works?' menu in the top navigation.

1 While the banner approach seems similar to those of Skillshare and in Kickstarter, the difference being that while it will eventually change to the next slide (unlike statically in

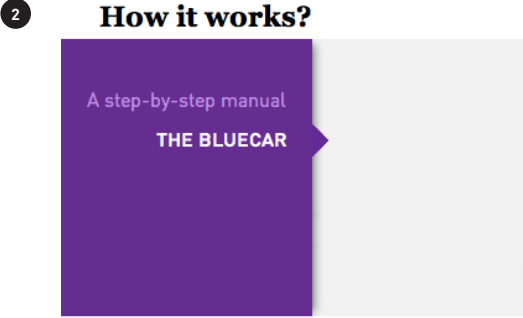
Kickstarter), it gives users much longer time to consume the content with the option to jump between slides (unlike in Skillshare where it changes too fast with no option to go back.)



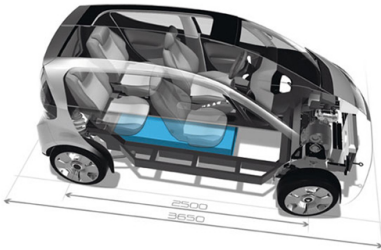
screen 2

1 The 'How It Works?' is clearly laid out with step-by-step explanation along with illustrations to keep the user understood and engaged. What is poor layout-wise (and this includes every pages apart from the homepage) is the enormous size of the banner, which also

acts as a sub menu navigation. Not only that users have to scroll down to start to see some content as the banner takes too much unnecessary space, it also asks the user to scroll all the way back up to navigate to other sub pages using the sub menus.



To navigate further information, however, proves a bit confusing. While on the top of the banner, there seems to be two sub pages inside 'How It Works?', but in reality, there is actually another page hidden at 3 which is the video tutorial (only in French.) Not that it will hinder the task's goal, but an adjustment in this would have been better, for example, the video tutorials link can simply appear under 'the BLUECAR' sub menu in the banner.

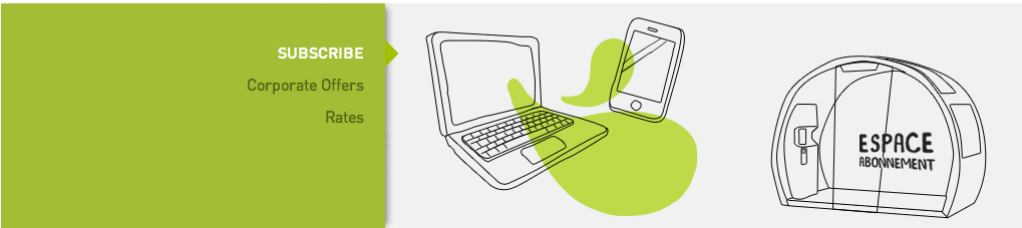


One of our highest priorities is your safety and this was fundamental to the development of the Bluecar. At the wheel of our electric car, you will benefit from a whole series of equipment which is designed especially with your protection and comfort in mind: airbags, electric power-steering and even a discreet warning sound to signal the proximity of the silent car to pedestrians. A yellow jacket and emergency triangle are also provided. How about your children? Don't worry, we haven't forgotten them! The car is equipped with a system to house a child seat, giving parents complete peace of mind.

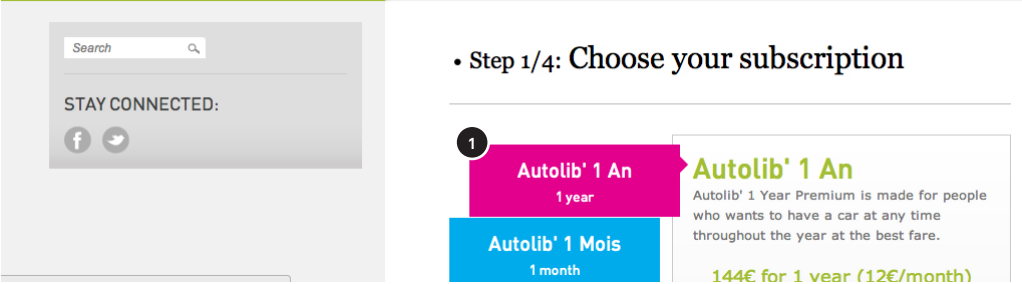
Dimensions And Weight		Power And Battery	
Length	3.65 m	Max power	50 kW
Width	1.70 m	Rated power	35 kW
Height	1.61 m	Batteries	30 kW BatScap Lithium Metal Polymer
Boot capacity	200 l (350 dm3)		
Kerb weight	1,120 kg		

> Home > Register > Subscribe

### Register



#### • Step 1/4: Choose your subscription



To find out about signing up, the best option from the top navigation is 'Offers & Rates'. Better wording option can be used here, for example, 'Subscription Rates', to increase clarity

as many users probably will look for terms like register, sign up, subscribe, become member, join, etc. when they want to join any particular service.



Inside the page, various packages are well presented, with content being on demand by clicking each package title, detailed information of that particular package will appear on the right, without having to reload the page.

The colour-coding is however, rather confusing. It is clear that the selected is the one shifted to the right with triangle form attached to it, but each offer's colour is illogical and confusing. The top is the only one in magenta (clearly can be mistaken for colour of the selected offer), and then the intensity of blue should suggest the subscription period. But the 'Forfait partage 16H' suddenly appears in intense blue again. Then the bottom two are in greyish tones, which looks like they are not clickable or not of importance (but then why are they here?)

+ More info

Billing is apportioned on the actual consumption time basis rounded to the next minute, except for the indivisible first 20 minutes (minimum charge).

- More info

#### • Step 2/4: Personal details

\* Required fields

Civility *	<input type="radio"/> Ms. <input type="radio"/> Mrs. <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mr.
Last name *	Toads
First name *	William
Birth date *	January 1 1980
Building	
Street *	66 Rue de Rivoli
Neighborhood	
Post code *	75004
City *	Paris
Country *	FRANCE
Land line	
Mobile line * and/or E-mail address *	+3367859632
E-mail address *	graphicaifairs@gmail.com
Confirm email address *	graphicaifairs@gmail.com
Language *	<input type="radio"/> French <input checked="" type="radio"/> English <input type="radio"/> Spanish

#### YOUR CLIENT ACCOUNT

Please create a username and password. You will require this information to access your user account.

Username *	
Required. 3 to 30 characters. Either letters, digits and +/./, or your email address.	
Password *	
Required. 8 characters or more are recommended.	
Password confirmation *	

#### YOUR AUTOLIB' BADGE

Please choose your PIN code. You will use this code everytime you use the service.

PIN code *	
Required. Between 4 and 32 characters. Only numbers and uppercase letters.	
Confirm the PIN code *	

☐ I have read and accepted the [terms and conditions](#)


Next step >

But it is good thing that all the offer's information is not presented to user at once, but giving him the option to 'see more' as information on demand. But the when the extra text is shown, the wording should have been 'Less info' instead of staying the same.


After choosing the plan the user feels appropriate to him, he is moved on to the step two, which is filling out information. While it is understandable that complete information about the user is absolutely necessary to ensure the smoothness of operation (for example, that the registering user can't simply steal the Bluecar and can't be tracked), but this process can be made much simpler. For example, the username can automatically be the same as email. And the difference between PIN Code and the Password is never properly explained, why the need for separate two? Can't they be the same?




• Step 3/4: Sending your documents



I will scan my ID, driving licence\* and a recent ID photo and upload them.




I will send a copy of my ID, driving licence\* and a recent ID photo by post without stamping to:  
SOCIÉTÉ AUTOLIB'  
LIBRE REPONSE 63046  
92423 VAUCRESSON CEDEX




I will scan my ID and driving licence\* at an Autolib' kiosk where I can also have an ID photo taken.

• Step 4/4: Payment Method



I will pay online by debit or credit card  
Pay 100% online by debit or credit card, it's easy, straightforward and completely secure.

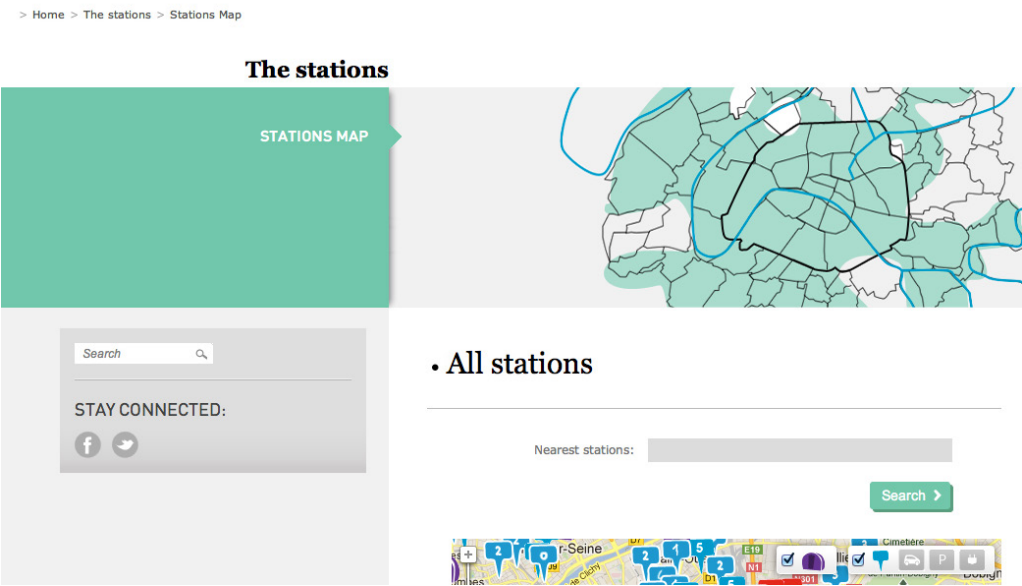


I will pay by debit or credit card at a subscription kiosk  
You can go to a subscription kiosk to pay your subscription with your debit card.

The rest of the steps are fairly simple and straightforward, with options being offered to users what is the most convenient for them (to register online or to go to the kiosk, for example.)

TASK 3: Locate the Bluecar at the stations and the kiosk

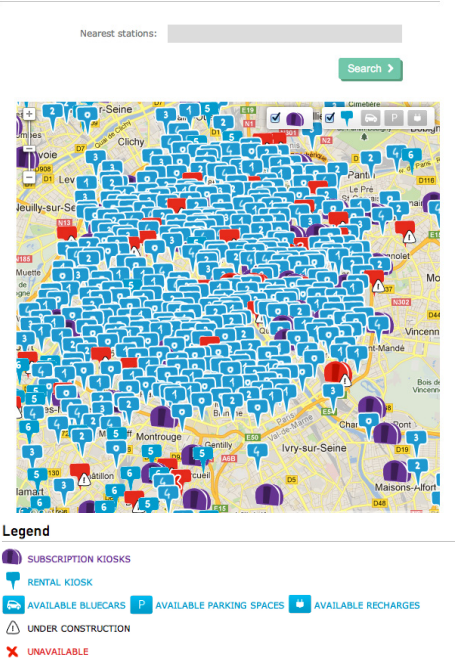
screen 3



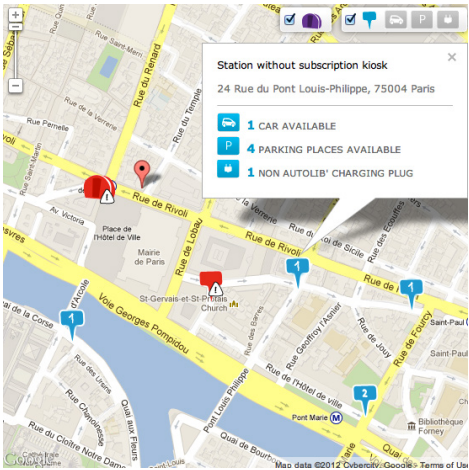
To locate the Bluecars, the menu 'Map & Stations' is selected. Again here, the wording is not exactly the best, as the term 'Map' can be

ambiguous (it could have meant any map, or map to the Autolib' HQ.) And for the first-time users, they may not know what 'stations' are.

• All stations



The map of the stations are too clustered. User has no choice but to zoom in and slowly start to comprehend what each symbols mean (located at the bottom.) This is due to the imbalance between information density and the distance the map should show. One solution could be that the further zoomed out, the smaller the icons become. Another solution is that the starting view can be tracked to user's current geoIP location with proximity close enough to make sense of all the icons. Or perhaps the icons can simply be redesigned to take up less space.



It is also questionable how updated these information is. What if a user walks up to the station and there is no car waiting for him as he saw on the map? This is the case where a live application will be very useful.

Since unfortunately I don't actually live in Paris and can't fully register to the service, I can't really say if there's a reservation service or SMS notification about the car's availability. But perhaps some kind of indication that the information seen here is live and always changing can assure the user that he sees what the situation actually IS, not WAS.

APPENDIX C

This appendix is showing social features evaluation in each of the five case studies. The color of the box in front of each feature indicates whether that feature is implemented. Green means Yes, Yellow means Partially and Red means No.

COUCHSURFING SOCIAL DESIGN FEATURES EVALUATION

1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UPS

Tagline explanation

“CouchSurfing helps you meet and adventure with new friends around the world.”

Graphics showing how it works



Travel is more fun when you have hospitable friends around the world who make you feel at home in any city.

Imagine having interesting friends around the world who will host you in their homes, show you around, and offer you a local's perspective on what's cool and interesting in their towns. All this for free.

Search for compatible hosts and fun activities in the cities you'll be travelling to.

Good copywriting

Casual-style copywriting, making the users feel at ease and informal.

Feature page

User profiles and forums are completely inaccessible without signing up.

Video / Screenshots Showing actual use

Not exactly showing the step-by-step usage, but more of a lifestyle showcase and showing how to prepare your mindset when joining the community (which is perhaps more important than to actually use the website.)



Can be used as soon as sign-up completed

Evidence of successful previous uses

Testimonials from users (which strangely, only appear after sign-up process)



Not making creating an account a requirement

Sign-up is a must, even just for reading user's profiles or using forums.

Ask only absolutely important information

On the landing page, yes, but in order to really use the service, quite detailed information is required. This is within good reasons since the 'people hospitality' is the resource being exchanged. Detailed and accurate information is vital.

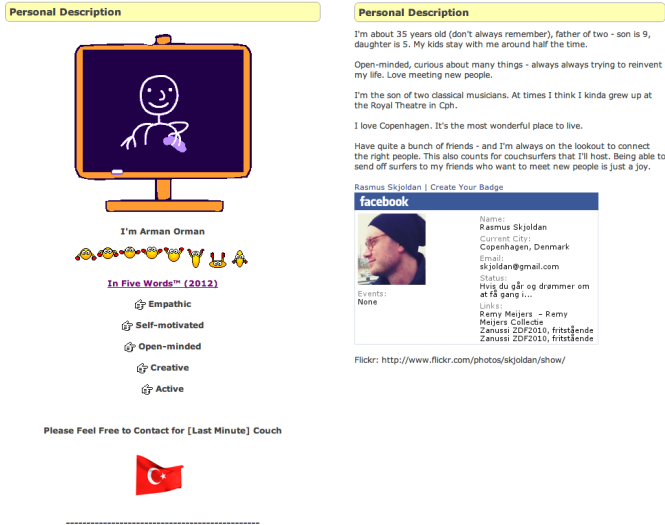
2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

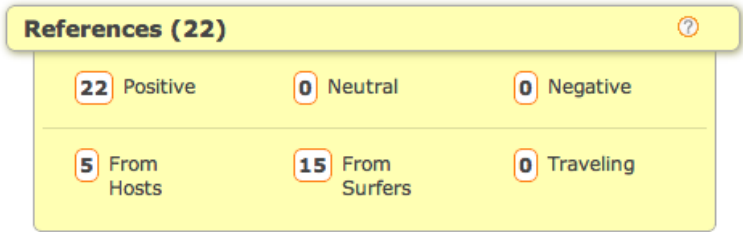
The profile page is perhaps one of the most important and detailed feature on the website.

Uniqueness

Each user's profile page can be highly customized with use of HTML tags. Below is a comparison between two users: Arman Orman's and Rasmus Skjoldan's 'Personal Description' section in each profile page.



Reputation



Sense of efficacy

With their previous (but still holds true) motto: “Participate in Creating a Better World, One Couch At A Time”, Couchsurfers can feel that the more they connect to others, the more understanding the world becomes. Through these hospitalities exchanges, the world can actually become a better place.

Control

Users have complete control of their informations and the actions of surfing and hosting.

Ownership

In ‘Discussions’ or ‘Activities’ areas, users are both presented with his alias and profile pictures whenever any content is user-generated.



A lecture about business plan, chatting and tea

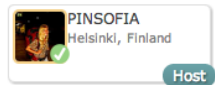
Topparikuja 2, Helsinki, Suomi [Get directions]



Time:  
Oct 1 at 5:00 pm - Oct 1 at 6:30 pm

Duration:  
1 hour and 30 m

Organized by:



Host

3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Invite a surfer / Couch request	Dashboard	Read profile, send message, ++contact list, print, read request, send invite, add friend, leave a reference
Discuss	Groups pages	Read posts, reply to posts, post a new message, create or manage polls, join/leave group, report
Activities	Activity pages	Read details, get directions, join, discuss, create an activity

4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

- Content easily sharable  
In this case, the content is the person’s profile. Each person’s profile has its own unique and simplified URL (in the format of: [couchsurfing.org/people/username](http://couchsurfing.org/people/username)) with an option to print.
- Heed the call to action  
The rest of the sharing features are presumably intentionally omitted. The reason is quite obvious since people’s profiles, unlike products, should not simply be advertised around on the web or social networks. There is no need to ‘urge’ users to share others’ profile quickly and efficiently.
- Use of sharing form
- Give people something to do after sharing
- Allow for multiple sharing

1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UPS

Tagline explanation

Clear and concise: “Kickstarter is a funding platform for creative projects.”

Graphics showing how it works

Only textual information is available.

How does Kickstarter work?

Thousands of creative projects are funding on Kickstarter at any given moment. Each project is independently created and crafted by the person behind it. The filmmakers, musicians, artists, and designers you see on Kickstarter have complete control and responsibility over their projects. They spend weeks building their project pages, shooting their videos, and brainstorming what rewards to offer backers. When they're ready, creators launch their project and share it with their community.

Every project creator sets their project's funding goal and deadline. If people like the project, they can pledge money to make it happen. If the project succeeds in reaching its funding goal, all backers' credit cards are charged when time expires. If the project falls short, no one is charged. Funding on Kickstarter is all-or-nothing.

Good copywriting

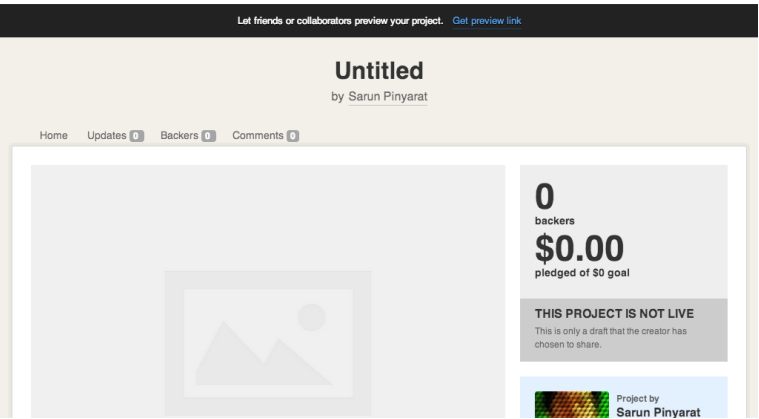
Professional and convincing copywriting, with occasional touch of playfulness.

*like you!*  
**We help people fund creative projects.**

**Kickstarter is the world's largest funding platform for creative projects.** Every week, tens of thousands of amazing people pledge millions of dollars to projects from the worlds of **music, film, art, technology, design, food, publishing** and other creative fields.

Feature page

Not a fully feature page, but Kickstarter let users preview their project even before filling in all information and submitting a project.



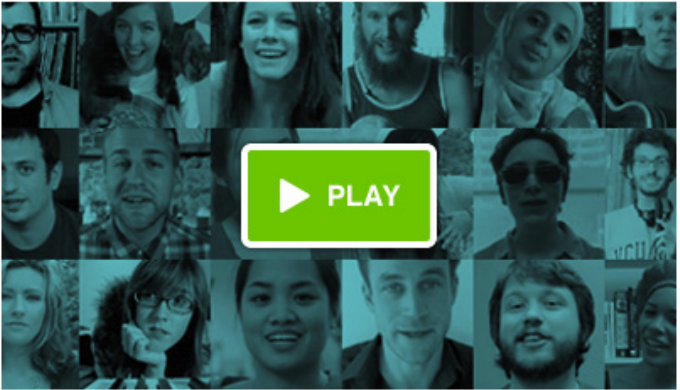
Video / Screenshots Showing actual use

Can be used as soon as sign-up completed

Evidence of successful previous uses

Users can start funding projects right away, but creating a project needs approval from Kickstarter after submission (between one to two days.)

Collection of stats and match-up user-generated videos guarantee the users of Kickstarter’s credential and past successfully funded projects.



*Each and every Kickstarter project is the independent creation of someone like you!*

Not making creating an account a requirement

Ask only absolutely important information

Even funding a project requires an account.

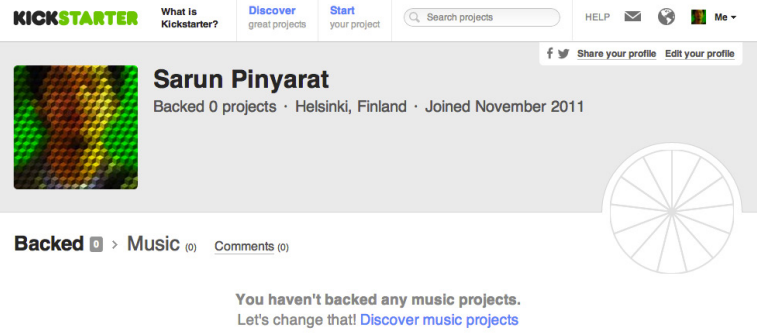
Signing up is simple enough with few informations asked with alternative to sign up with Facebook.



2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

Each user has his own dedicated profile page.



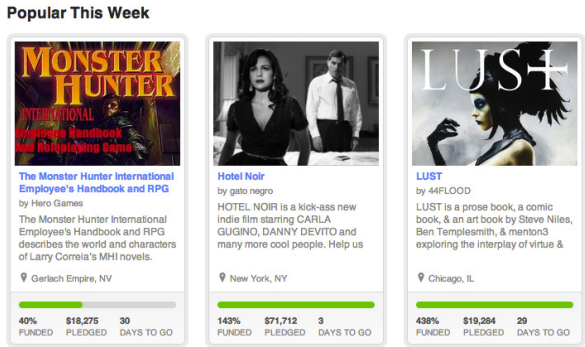
Uniqueness

Every profile pages looks the same, while the project pages can be decorated slightly differently with certain limits.

Reciprocity

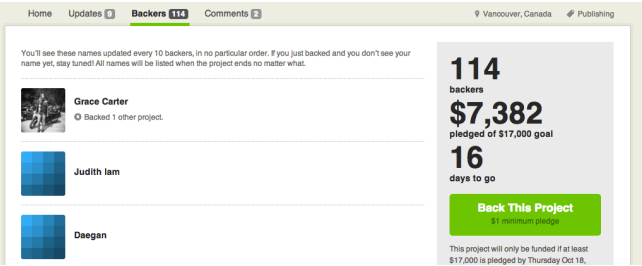
The rewards system makes reciprocity a necessary and part of the rule rather than out of generosity.

Reputation



Sense of efficacy

All the 'backers' somehow share a sense of efficacy that they are joining (by giving money) together to create something they feel great and are all connected to. They will feel as much a part of the project as the creator.

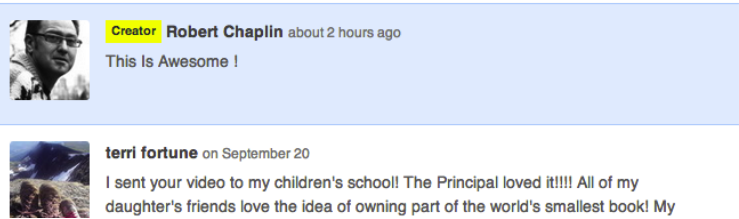


Control

Users can freely edit their profile and comments.

Ownership

When a project is created or a comment is made, usernames and profile images are always present.



3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Backing a project	Project page	Back the project, like (on Facebook), embed (as HTML), tweet (on Twitter), post a comment
Creating a project	Project page	Input of required informations: basics, rewards, story, about you, account and review. Preview the project, answer questions, post a comment

4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Content easily sharable

Unique URL available with option to embed it using HTML tags.

Heed the call to action

Sharing options are clearly visible underneath the project's main video.



Use of sharing form

No email sharing available.

Give people something to do after sharing

Allow for multiple sharing

1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UPS

- Tagline explanation
- Graphics showing how it works

about > help > how to post

How to submit a free craigslist post

Follow the steps below to submit a free post to craigslist without using an account

If you want to post using a [craigslist account](#), start on [your account homepage](#). Click the "new posting" tab and select your post's location, then follow the steps below.

Please note that the steps may vary a bit depending on the category of your post.

Choose a category for your post

1. Visit our homepage, [craigslist.org](#).

SF bay area w sfc sby eby pen nby scz

- Make sure the location named at the top is where you want to post.
- If the location is not correct, visit our [list of available sites](#) and choose the most appropriate one.

2. Click "post to classifieds" in the top-left corner.



3. Select a category for your post.

What type of posting is this:  
  
☐ job offered  
☐ resume / job wanted  
  
☐ housing offered  
☐ housing wanted

Good copywriting

Not very professional but very friendly and casual copywriting.

Feature page

Video / Screenshots Showing actual use

Can be used as soon as sign-up completed

Allow usage without signing up.

Evidence of successful previous uses

Not making creating an account a requirement

Ask only absolutely important information

2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

Each user can customize his own profile page to a certain extent.

handle: RUFF-\_\_-1

email: unpublished

since: 9 Apr 2012 (173 days)

note:



up to 50 posts from the last 31 days for RUFF-\_\_-1

loz jokes (context)

I'll Mai Tai on one for ya.. < RUFF-\_\_-1 > 09/28/2012 13:27 -5

33 ...

loz jokes (context)

Oh, dear gawd no...no...no.no...NO!!!!!! § < RUFF-\_\_-1 > 09/28/2012 12:26

loz jokes (context)

Unless you bite them, then... < RUFF-\_\_-1 > 09/28/2012 11:40 -1

well, you know

loz jokes (context)

Hey hsb, found this under your pillow < RUFF-\_\_-1 > 09/28/2012 11:18 -1

[ IMAGE ]

Yes, I was in your house. Surprise!

tpa jokes (context)

Got the new iphone5 yesterday < RUFF-\_\_-1 > 09/28/2012 07:41 -28+23

I immediately went to siri to test out its new features.

Uniqueness

Posts have indication who is the author displayed only in text, nothing more. Profile page is restricted on what information can be added and displayed.

Reciprocity

Reputation

Classified and posts can be flagged and/or rated.

please flag with care: [\[?\]](#)

[miscategorized](#)

[prohibited](#)

[spam/overpost](#)

[best of craigslist](#)

[reply to this post](#) [rate](#) [flag](#)

**Sarah** < **nomoretroll** > 09/28 23:21:35

What do you mean by safe? I've driven on both routes and they are both safe for driving, for the most part they are flat and straight. If you mean safe as in crime I'm not sure but the 40 is more populated. The 10 goes right through Phoenix , taking a long drive through Texas . The 40 goes through the panhandle of Texas , taking only a couple of hours, and it travels further north, through Flagstaff .

Have a good and safe trip.

Sense of efficacy

Control

Classified can be edited or deleted while posts can't.

**Good and cheap vegetarian place around SF Bay?** < **memento85** >  
09/29/2012 05:54

Any recommendations? Thanks guys :)

☐ email me all new replies to this thread

commit

edit again

caution: once posted, you can't change or delete

page: 1

Status	Manage	Posting	Posted In	Posted Date	ID
Active	<a href="#">edit</a> <a href="#">delete</a>	<a href="#">Want a used iPhone 4s - \$250</a>	hel items wanted	2012-09-29 06:07	3304265966

page: 1

Click the posting title to go to the 'manage' page for that posting.  
We are not able to offer a removal option at this time.

Ownership

Sense of authorship exists, but not emphasized.

3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Post a classified	Classified page	Owner: Edit, delete Others: Read, reply, flag
Compose new thread	Discussion forum	Read, reply, rate, flag

4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Content easily sharable Unique permanent URL available for sharing, but no other options to print, or connect to social networks.

- Heed the call to action
- Use of sharing form
- Give people something to do after sharing
- Allow for multiple sharing

1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UPS

Tagline explanation

Clear and concise: “Skillshare is a community marketplace for classes.”

Graphics showing how it works

Only textual information is available.

How it Works

Skillshare began as a way for communities to share local knowledge by teaching and taking classes on everything from programming to entrepreneurship to cooking. The most vibrant local communities include New York City, where Skillshare is headquartered, and San Francisco.

Students can enroll in two types of classes on Skillshare:

Local Classes

These classes meet in person, where students in the same community come together to learn skills in a single or multi-session class ranging from entrepreneurship to cooking.

Hybrid Classes

These classes combine project-based, online learning with in-person workshops, allowing students to collaborate and learn with others around the globe.

Skillshare is fueled by the passion and commitment of regular people all over the world. Anyone with experience and knowledge to share can teach a class, and any place can be a classroom -- a co-working space, coffee shop, garage or conference room.

All classes you see on Skillshare are lovingly hand-curated by our education team to ensure the best possible experience for every student.

Good copywriting

The copy is very well written with storytelling style. Constant use of ‘we’ to include the audience within the monologue.

Feature page

Video / Screenshots  
Showing actual use



Can be used as soon as sign-up completed

Evidence of successful previous uses

Videos telling story of successful teachers who have hosted classes with Skillshare.




Not making creating an account a requirement

Users have to sign up, even for taking a class.

Ask only absolutely important information

Signing up is simple enough with few informations asked with alternative to sign up with Facebook.

 Sign up using Facebook

First Name

Last Name

Email Address

Password

Minimum 5 characters

Zip / Postal Code

By signing up, you agree to the [Community Guidelines](#), [Terms of Use](#), and [Privacy Policy](#)

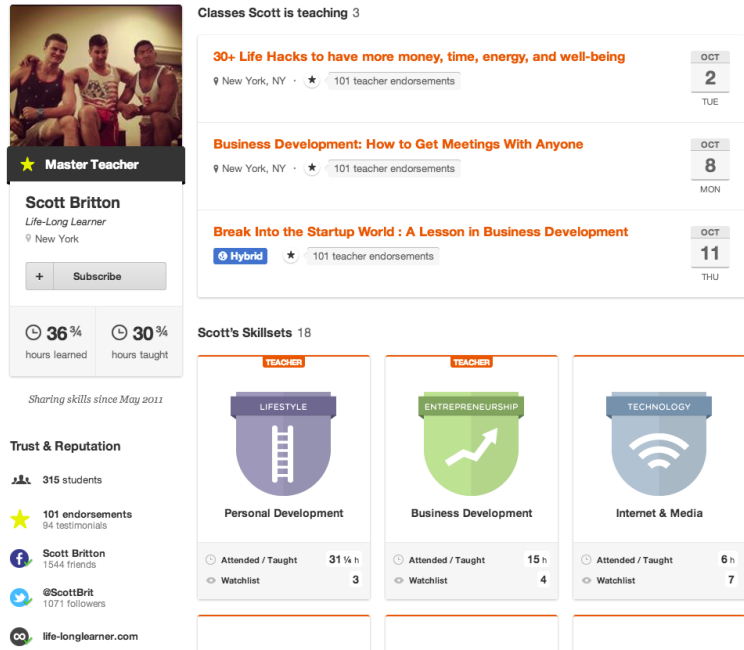
Sign Up



2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

Each user has his own profile page with information regarding hours taught and learned, trust, reputation and classes that user is teaching soon.



Uniqueness

While the information displayed will vary between users depending on the user's activity in Skillshare, the overall feeling is indifferent. The same goes for classes where very little customizing can be made.

Reciprocity

No reciprocity, as this is very much business and students pay to get to the classes.

Reputation

Reputation system is done by 'endorsing' teachers, with option to leave them 'testimonials', increasing the credibility and popularity of particular classes.

Sense of efficacy

There is no strong sense that users are doing something together leading to any causes.

Control

Users have complete control of their profiles, settings, testimonials and discussions. Although, there is no option to completely delete the class.

Ownership

All classes created display clearly who is the teacher's profile. Testimonials and comments show a small profile picture and a username.



3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Learn	Classes page	View details, enroll, +watchlist, give endorsement to teacher, give testimonials to teacher, discuss, share
Teach	Class creation page	Input information on new class, schedule a class, edit, delete, create a syllabus, discuss, share

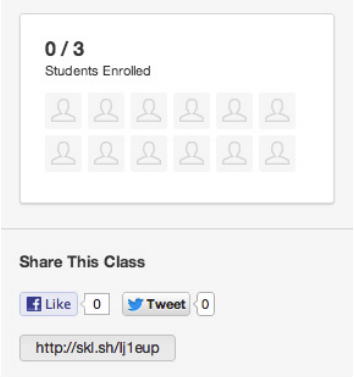
4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Content easily sharable

Unique URL available with short URL option ready to be shared through many means.

Heed the call to action

Sharing options are clearly visible on the right column of each classes. Options are 'like' (on Facebook), 'tweet' (on Twitter) and a short URL available.



Use of sharing form

No email sharing available.

Give people something to do after sharing

Allow for multiple sharing

## 1. DESIGN FOR SIGN-UPS

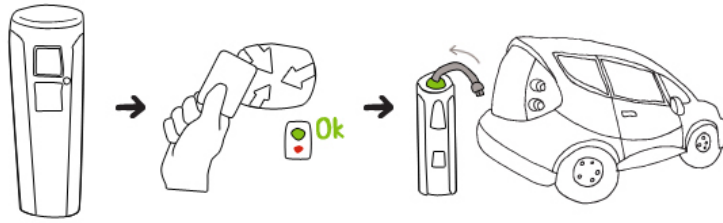
Tagline explanation

There is no simple sentence or explanation what the service is all about.

Graphics showing how it works

Well explained text with illustrations.

## 02 RENT



Good copywriting

The copy is very professionally written, concise and persuasive.

## AN EXCELLENT IDEA TO CHANGE OUR CITY

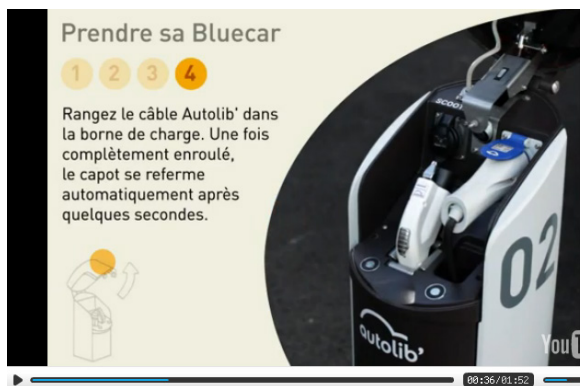
With Autolib' and the 100% electric Bluecar, we will all be able to drive without polluting the city with noise and fumes. The electric engine, which produces no micro particles nor exhaust fumes, will allow us all to contribute to France's commitment to reducing carbon emissions to 20% by 2020. This is making real inroads to durable development.

**-20%**  
**CO<sub>2</sub>**  
EMISSIONS

Feature page

Video / Screenshots  
Showing actual use

Many videos are created to explain both the benefit and how the service works (although no emphasis on the website usage.)



Can be used as soon as sign-up completed

Evidence of successful previous uses

Since the service involves physical car, additional time is needed to approve the person's official identity.

Weak text-only testimonials, with no proof of user's identity.

## TÉMOIGNAGES

EDITH 10 Septembre 2012

Bonjour, je suis utilisatrice du service Autolib depuis qlq mois et vraiment je trouve ça formidable et très pratique. Je n'ai eu jusque là que de très bons contacts avec le centre clients et je les ai trouvés investis et très professionnels.

VALENTINE 2 Septembre 2012

Avec mon conjoint, on se fait des "soirées autolib" ! Comme il y a toujours des emplacement libres dans tous les quartiers de Paris, on peut se garer partout. donc on prends une blue car et on décide au dernier moment où aller. chaque soirée un quartier différent à aller visiter et où prendre un pot. les derniers en date : le Marais, Saint Germain, la Bastille, super !

MARIANNE 31 Aout 2012

Vous pouvez aussi faire votre pub sur la bonne conception et le volume de votre coffre à bagages...

Ma fille, de retour d'extrême orient avec mari, enfant et très gros bagages-sacs à dos, trouvait inutile que je vienne les chercher à l'aéroport dans « une aussi petite voiture ».... Hé bien si, tout est rentré dans l'autolib et la petite famille est rentrée à la maison sans encombre.

Not making creating an account a requirement

Ask only absolutely important information

The sign-up process is not very intuitive and can be redundant (email can be used with username, password and PIN code can be the same, for example.)

## YOUR CLIENT ACCOUNT

Please create a username and password. You will require this information to access your user account.

Username \*   
Required. 3 to 30 characters. Either letters, digits and +/~/\_ or your email address.

Password \*   
Required. 8 characters or more are recommended.

Password confirmation \*

## YOUR AUTOLIB' BADGE

Please choose your PIN code. You will use this code everytime you use the service.

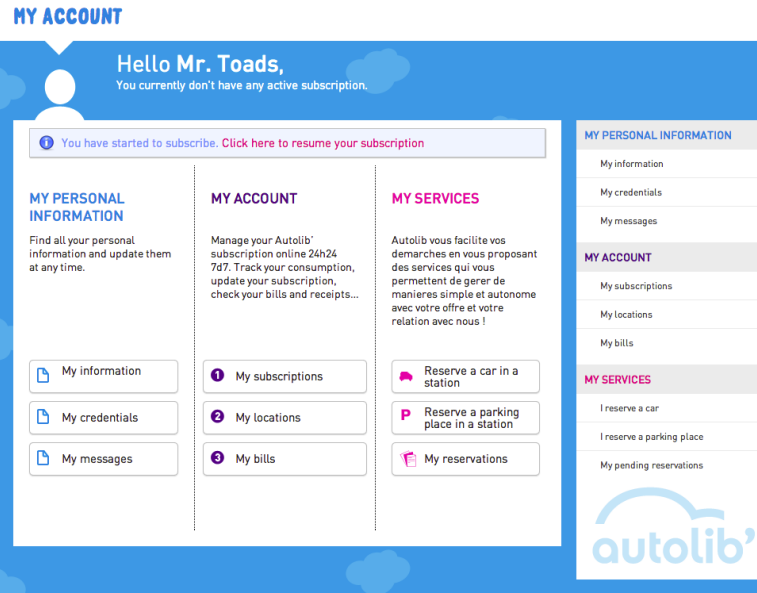
PIN code \*   
Required. Between 4 and 32 characters. Only numbers and uppercase letters.

Confirm the PIN code \*

2. DESIGN FOR ON-GOING PARTICIPATION

Identity

Each user has his own dedicated profile page.



- Uniqueness
- Reciprocity
- Reputation
- Sense of efficacy

Control

Users can change their personal information, credentials, subscriptions and locations. The service also allows bills to be paid online.

Ownership

3. DESIGN FOR COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Action	Display	Feedbacks
Cars and stations	Stations map page	Locate a station/cars or subscription kiosks, Book a vehicle, book a parking space,

4. DESIGN FOR SHARING

Content easily sharable

While each page has its own URL. To share a location of a car or a station is not an option.

Heed the call to action

No persuasion to share the information on any of the pages.

Use of sharing form

Give people something to do after sharing

Allow for multiple sharing





**a visual  
designers  
guideline**

**to**

**collaborative  
consumption  
services**

A Master's Thesis by Sarun Pinyarat  
Aalto University, ARTS

# So, a Guideline Booklet?

Hello, dear readers. My name is Sarun Pinyarat, a visual designer and the author of the very guideline booklet you are holding. This guideline is part of my MA Graphic Design thesis for Aalto University, School of Art, Design and Architecture, Helsinki. For more information about the thesis, how to download digital version and the guideline's background, please refer to the acknowledgments at the end of the booklet.

1. From now on, when a 'Chapter' is mentioned, it always refers to the content from my thesis.

So, what is this guideline all about? As the title suggests, it is about **VISUAL DESIGNERS** and **COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION SERVICES**.

Who are visual designers? They are professionals doing visually-led creative practices, from graphic design, illustration, typography, photography artistic direction to user interface and everything in between.

What is collaborative consumption? Collaborative consumption is a new consumption model which I believe is the future of sustainable consumption. It is more sustainable for nature, for us humans and for economics than hyper consumption, the model in which our societies are living today. For more about collaborative consumption, you can either:

- read my thesis *Chapter 1*.<sup>1</sup>
- read 'What's Mine is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative

Consumption' by Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers.

- visit to [www.collaborativeconsumption.com](http://www.collaborativeconsumption.com).

This guideline is the result from my research question—*How can visual designers contribute to collaborative consumption services?* From my extensive research (from *Chapter 2*) and personal hands-on experience (from *Chapter 3*), I am able to draw conclusions categorized into 7 steps in which visual designers can contribute to collaborative consumption services. They can do so by (1) learning the contexts, (2) planning the projects, (3) ensuring the performance, (4) giving it the right face, (5) associating with target audience, (6) facilitating social interactions and (7) confirming quality and professionalism. The content of this guideline is therefore divided into seven parts.

In each step, the main content will consist of actions and considerations that should be taken account for. Additionally, some steps may contain two extra boxes of information. A **SERVICE DESIGN BOX** exhibits methodologies taken from 'This is Service Design Thinking' book by Marc Stickdorn and



Jakob Schneider<sup>2</sup> (the reason for this is stated in *Chapter 4*.) A **RESOURCES BOX** exhibits further sources that are worth studying if you feel like acquiring extra information in particular areas.

## Good to Know

Please keep in mind that this is only a guideline and not a manual. This is the result of a study with limited time and resources. See it more as a first stepping stone, an introductory guideline, a 101 course, or a ‘Dummy’s Guide to’, if you will. There will likely be parts in the guideline that are even out of date at publication due to the rapidly changing nature of digital online services.

While this guideline is written to be as general as possible, it is advised to adapt the strategy case by case, since there are so many variables involved in the design process that it is impossible to list all scenarios here.

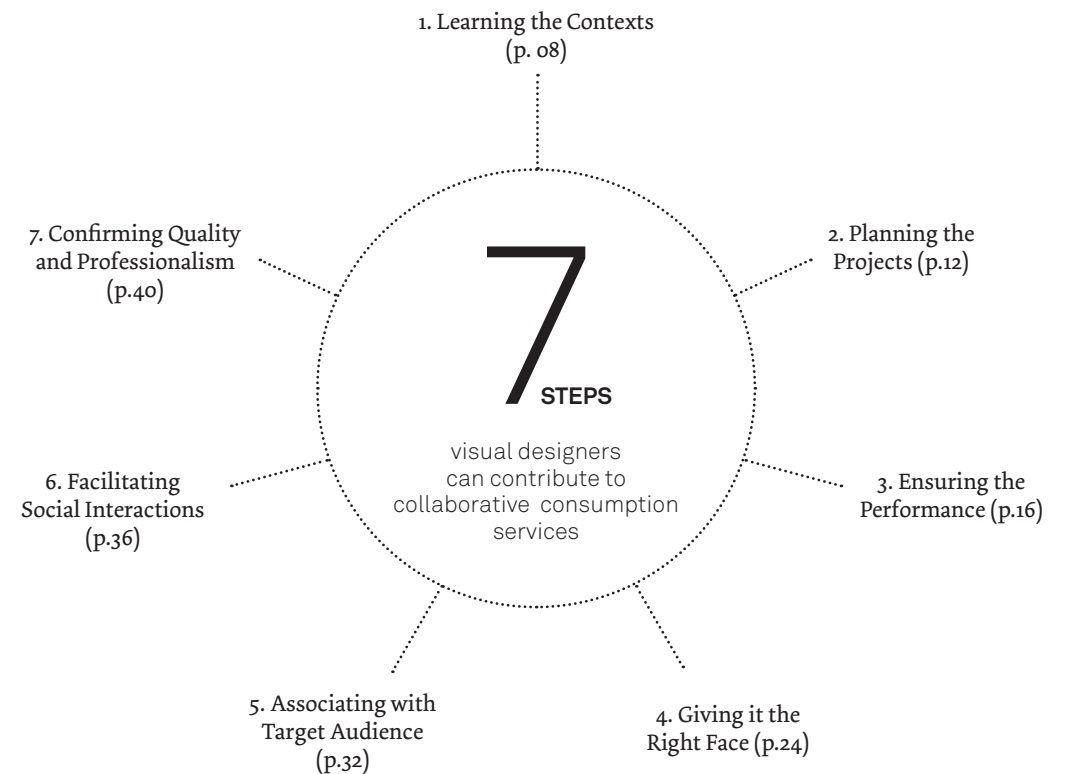
If you are designing a collaborative consumption service from scratch, it is worth reading the whole guideline from beginning to end before actually starting the design process. The content can give you a heads-up and overview of the whole process before diving in. If you are improving your existing services, you can simply jump to the area of your interest and focus there.

While this guideline mainly concerns aspects of visual design, it is also suitable for interaction designers, project entrepreneurs, marketers and front-end developers. Other interested individuals can also use the guide, but certain technical terms may need additional explanation, which you will need to seek out for yourself.

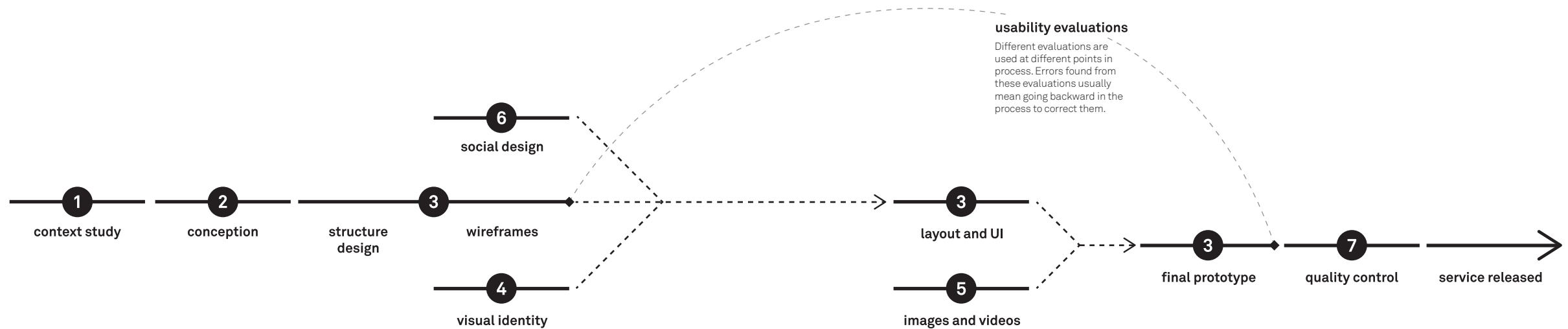
In this guideline, seven collaborative consumption projects will be mentioned. Five are existing successes. They are: Couchsurfing, Kickstarter, Skillshare, Craigslist and Autolib’. The remaining two are projects that I have personally been involved with: Cake Theory and Caloom. Please refer to the beginning *Chapters 2 and 3* of the thesis for more information.



## Content



# Relationships of each Steps in the Process



- (1) Learning the contexts
- (2) Planning the projects
- (3) Ensuring the performance
- (4) Giving it the right face
- (5) Associating with target audience
- (6) Facilitating social interactions
- (7) Confirming quality and professionalism.



# One. learning the contexts

Before jumping into the actual design process, it is extremely important to know the contexts, the environment surrounding the service you are designing. These elements may include, but are not limited to: competitors, government, consultant, supplier and consumer.<sup>3</sup> While it may be perceived that this stage should be taken care of by marketers or entrepreneurs, visual designers can actually contribute to this process hugely through their more experienced eyes and better understanding of visualization. There are a total of 3 areas visual designers can contribute at this stage:

3. Stickdorn and Schneider  
(2012, p. 152)

## COMPETITOR ANALYSIS USING 6-POINT ANALYSIS

6-point analysis is a tool that I developed to analyze the five case studies in *Chapter 2* of my thesis. It can be adapted to analyze any existing collaborative consumption service. To understand your competitor's design decisions are crucial, not only to know their strengths and weaknesses, but also to learn how to distinguish yourself from the rest of the group. Moreover, you will likely notice some great design decisions they have been made that you can adopt, adapt and utilize to suit your own services. The following diagram shows the 6-point analysis (image 1.) To learn more in detail, please see *Chapter 2, p. 41-45*.

## VISUAL POSITIONING AND MAPPING

In order to create a unique face – a visual identity – for your own service, positioning mapping can be a very useful tool. It is very similar to the brand positioning and marketing mapping used by marketers, except that the qualities you are dealing with here are visual ones. One, two or even three axes of bi-polar factors can help you see clearly what the faces of your competitors look like, and if there is an area you can exploit and put your own identity. For example, the x-axis can be a bi-polar between [casual-formal] while the y-axis might be between [simple-complex]. The following image is one example how to do logo mapping (image 2.)

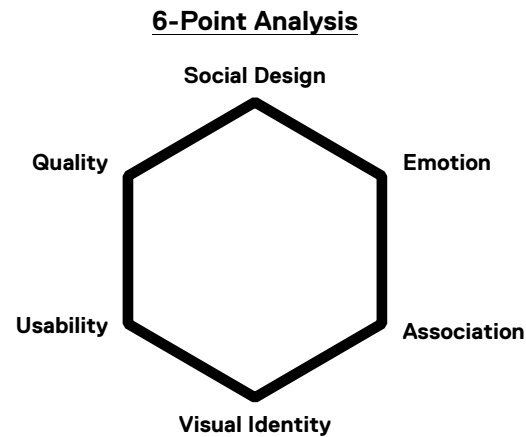
## STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

Visual designers can also strip down competitor's service structures and wire-frame them in addition to the 6-point analysis. When doing the Kickstarter structural analysis, I learned a great deal from it (see *Chapter 3, p.132*.) Its structure became the starting point in designing Cake Theory's structure (see *Chapter 3, p.134*.) Considerable improvements were added to make the structure leaner and more efficient. While I did not have enough time to study Kickstarter's wire-frames, I believe that it would have proven extremely useful.

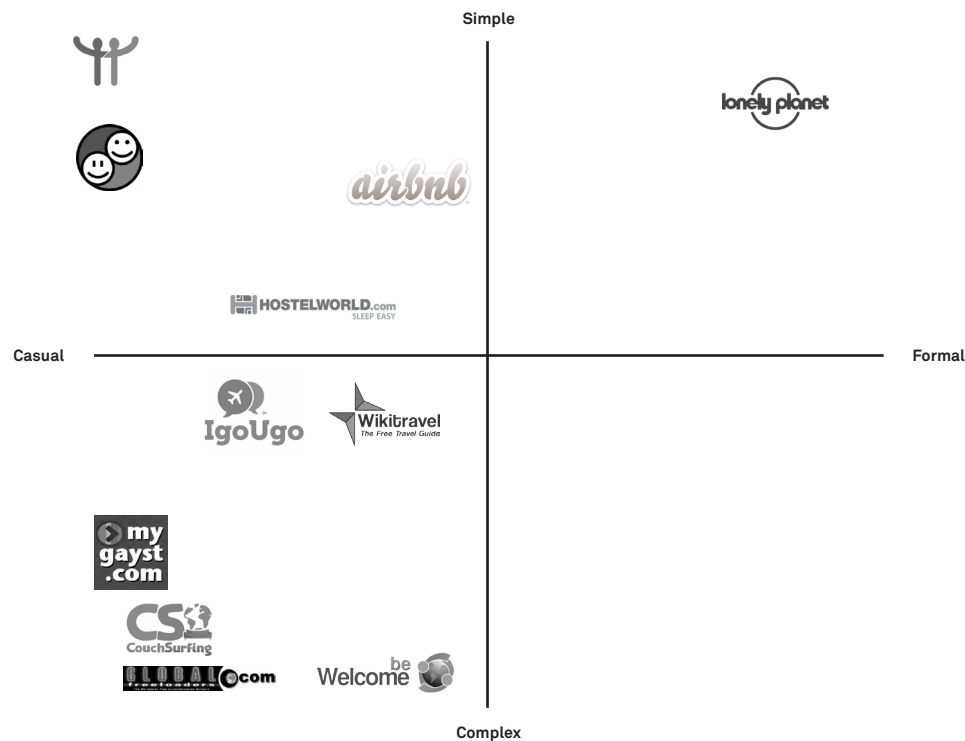
While this process can be time consuming, it is rather rewarding.

As traditional graphic designers may not be familiar with how to strip down one service's structure or wire-frame, a front-end developer can also take responsibility for this process.

**Image 1 (right)** 6-point analysis is a framework based on professor of marketing Kevin Keller's 'Essential brand building blocks.' It is used in Chapter 2 as the basis to analyze five existing collaborative consumption case studies.



**Image 2 (below)** Example of logo mappings for Couchsurfing. More examples can be found in Chapter 2.



## SERVICE DESIGN METHODS

**Shadowing**  
involves researchers immersing themselves in the lives of customers, front-line staff, or people behind the scenes in order to observe their behaviour and experiences.

**Personas**  
are fictional profiles, often developed as a way of representing a particular group based on their shared interests. They represent a 'character' with which client and design teams can engage.

**A Day in the Life**  
collates the research material pertaining to a particular type of customer (which may have already been collated into a persona) in order to create a descriptive walkthrough of their typical daily activities.

**Contextual Interviews**  
are conducted in the environment, or context, in which the service process of interest occurs. This ethnographic technique allows interviewers to both observe and probe the behaviour they are interested in.

**Customer Journey Map**  
provides a vivid but structured visualization of a service user's experience. The touch-points where users interact with the service are often used in order to construct a 'journey' – an engaging story based upon their experience. This story details their service interactions and accompanying emotions in a highly accessible manner.

**Mobile Ethnography**  
can be defined as ethnographic research that takes place independently of geography (true for many collaborative consumption services.) This usually means that the researcher is not present in person, but the technique differs from cultural probes in that instead of participants being directed, the insights generated revolve around how participants choose to structure the research themselves.

**Cultural Probes**  
are information gathering packages. Based around the principle of user-participation via self-documentation, the probes are usually given to research participants for a prolonged period of time, during which they can produce richly engaging material for design inspiration.

## RESOURCES+

**Prints**  
+ *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team* by Alina Wheeler (2009)  
+ *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web: Designing Large-Scale Web Sites* by Peter Morville and Lou Rosenfeld (2006)

+ *Communicating Design: Developing Web Site Documentation for Design and Planning* by Dan Brown (2010)  
+ *What's Mine Is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption* by Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers (2010) and its official website: [collaborativeconsumption.com](http://collaborativeconsumption.com)

# two.

## planning the projects

No less important than knowing the external factors is the ability to assess the project, your team's capabilities, and to come up with a project plan. Internal communication is crucial. If all the members in the team share the same understanding of the concept and what, when, where, how and why to execute the concept, I would say half of the work is already done. Here are some key areas visual designers are encouraged to be involved in at this stage.

4. Neumeier (2005)

### SERVICE & BRAND ESSENCE

Before drawing the first line of sketches for a logo, or even coming up with the service name, it is a sin not to first define what is it that this collaborative consumption service is actually all about. It is practical to think of collaborative consumption services as brands at this stage. In 'Brand Gap', Marty Neumeier posted 3 basic yet very important questions that every brand should be able to answer in a compelling way\*:

*Who are you?*

*What do you do?*

*Why does it matter?*

If you are able to answer these questions concisely and compellingly you are off to a good start. I would see the third question as being the most important to answer. Why would anyone bother and spend their time in using, or even looking into what you have to offer? This involves aspects like how are you different from existing competitors in the market, what is your superiority and what unique value can you provide to your customers. Here is a good example from Skillshare:

*Who are you?* We are Skillshare. Skillshare is a global marketplace for classes.

*What do you do?* We enable people to learn real-world skills from anyone, anywhere. We power thousands of creative, collaborative classes on everything from programming to design to crafts.

*Why does it matter?* Skillshare has the potential to revolutionize education system for the better by democratize learning by empowering teaching.

After this, you can start asking other questions to further strengthen your brand essence:

*To whom is it for?*

*When is it used?*

*How does it work?*

And more! The more you ask yourself these questions, the stronger and more focused your brand becomes, which is extremely important in order for your

brand to shine through in competitive markets. As Neumeier says, “Our brains act as filters to protect us from too much information. We’re hard-wired to notice only what’s different. Solution: Be different... The three most important words in differentiating your brand: Focus, focus and focus.”<sup>5</sup>

Then, if possible, it is a good idea to create a brand personality. There are hundreds of marketing and brand-related books that deal with this issue. Of all methods, one of my favorites is to look at the brand as a person. In *Cake Theory*, we (my client and I) have created ‘Cake Man’, a human character that represents how *Cake Theory* should ‘look and feel’ like. We gave him a life—with skills, background, personality, and even marital status (see *Chapter 3*, p.138.) The reason being that the way people engage with brands are not much different than engagement with humans. It is a “gut feeling” in Neumeier’s word, because “people are emotional and intuitive beings.” People tend to trust people with consistency and honesty than those who are not, just like with brands.

This brand personality will be used to dictate all elements in the visual identity, tone of voice in copy-writing and everything in between. Every single visual element in your service should go along with this personality.

While this step may sound like what the entrepreneurs, innovators or marketers in the team should be responsible of, visual designers can participate in the brainstorming process and contribute ideas, feedback or in some cases, come up with brilliant copy.

KNOW YOUR TEAM & PLATFORM

It goes without saying that everyone should know his/her own capabilities and what they can contribute to a team, but it is important that your team-mates also know as much. Self introduction sessions sharing portfolios and past experience will provide a good kick-starting meeting if the team members do not yet know each other well.

For visual designers, it is always nice to come up with beautiful layouts and typography, but the reality is that, many times, they are not implemented or are not suitable for the chosen platform, or your team members may not be able to translate your design into a working product. My direct experience of this was with Caloom where the majority of layouts were useless because there was no concrete idea how to use those designs in web interfaces, and we were forced to switch to ‘Bootstrap’ as a front-end developing framework (*Chapter 3*, p.166.)

Choosing the right platform from the earliest stages according to your team’s capabilities will make everyone’s life easier. Do you have a front-end developer? Can your back-end developer also do front-end coding?

Or can the visual designers do that by himself? Is an out-source needed? Changing platform in the middle of the process can be frustrating, as many times the previous work has to be thrown away because there is no way to fit them into a Bootstrap, as happened in Caloom.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORKFLOW

On pages 6-7 in this guideline is a general work-flow for any web application including collaborative consumption services. This is simply an overview and not every project must follow these steps or this order. You can use this work-flow as a general milestone to discuss within the team the timing of delivery at each stage, to keep everyone organized and on the same page.

SERVICE DESIGN METHODS

**What IF**  
is a question that the team may pose in order to prompt exploration of even the most out-landish scenarios.

**Storyboards**  
is a series of drawings or pictures that visualize a particular sequences of events. This might include a common situation where a service is used, or the hypothetical implementation of a new service prototype.

**Idea Generation**  
are what service designers use to structure and inspire group brainstorming sessions. They usually take the form of simple exercises which can be used to stimulate group discussions, whilst also providing a structure within which to work. Mind-mapping, S.W.O.T. analysis and Six Thinking Hats are all examples of ideation techniques.

RESOURCES+

**Prints**  
+ *The Brand Gap: How to Bridge the Distance Between Business Strategy and Design* by Marty Neumeier (2008)  
+ *The Culting of Brands: when customers become true believers* by Douglas Atkin (2004)

+ *A Project Guide to UX Design: For user experience designers in the field or in the making* by Russ Unger and Carolyn Chandier (2012)



# three.

## ensuring the performance

Of the seven steps, I personally think this the most crucial. If the core function does not perform as expected it does not matter if your brand identity looks stunning or the imagery is very professionally produced; no one will use your service. Period. Imagine if Kickstarter could not transfer funding to a project creator or that the couch requests in Couchsurfer were not sent to the hosts, then you get the idea. There are many things you can do to ensure that your service performs as it should. What is shown here are just some highlights that are especially related to visual design. I would encourage you to gather further knowledge using the resource section at the end.

6. Rettig (1994)

### PROCESS

To ensure that a service performs as promised, what you need to be concerned with most is its usability. Here are suggested steps that you can follow:

- List all the functions the service has to offer. This should be done in a brainstorming sessions with the whole team.

- Build information architecture by mapping those functions into pages and structure them into a site-map. Connect how the information flows between each page in the site-map and with the service's back-end database. At this stage, visual designers should be working very closely with front-end and back-end developers if possible, to make sure that all of you understand the core of the service correctly.

- Front-end developer, visual designer or both take responsibility in creating the wire-frames—the layout skeleton of which elements will be seen in each pages. What you have by now is complete information architecture.

- Paper prototyping can now be used for user testing at this early stage in the process to get early user feedback. By doing so, the design team can already start improving the structure and wire-frame. The benefit of this is that it takes so much less time to change the structure and wire-frame at this stage, rather than complete layouts and codes once those implementations have started. It is also a good communication tool within the team, as it will be the first artifact that everyone gets to try out.<sup>6</sup> The information architecture should now be redefined and ready to go.

- If either your client or developer is not in the team, it is a very good idea to let both of these parties approve the information architecture before actually start designing the layout, as the developer can estimate if he/she can actually code the design, and the client can check if all the desired functions are included. As mentioned, either or both of these parties might suggest some changes, which can be done much faster at this stage. It also limits the client's focus to function, rather than on other details like color preference or typographical errors, which should not be main concerns at

this stage.

- After the skeletons are in place, applying the layout design which follows both wire-frames and visual identity guideline will prove very smooth and effective. Changes might still happen, but will likely be minimal.

- When the layout designs are complete, the visual designer should pass the work on to the front-end developer (if the design is to be statically done using Adobe Illustrator, for example), or directly to the back-end developer if the visual designer has already designed the layout on front-end framework tools like Bootstrap or Dreamweaver.

- After the design is ready, it should go through another usability evaluation stage at this point. The method can be anything appropriate—testing, inspection or inquiry, depending on the personnel, time and financial resources available. Visual designers and developers can at least perform an inspection method like a cognitive walk through (see Chapter 2, p. 96-97.)

- Depending on the degree of errors or mistakes found, changes might include cosmetic ones like button colors, or it can go all the way to alter the structure and wire-frame.

- After all these process, your service is now ready to be launched! But not all the work ends here. As mentioned, unlike print, collaborative consumption lives and breathes in the digital environment, where changes are always possible.

#### NAVIGATION

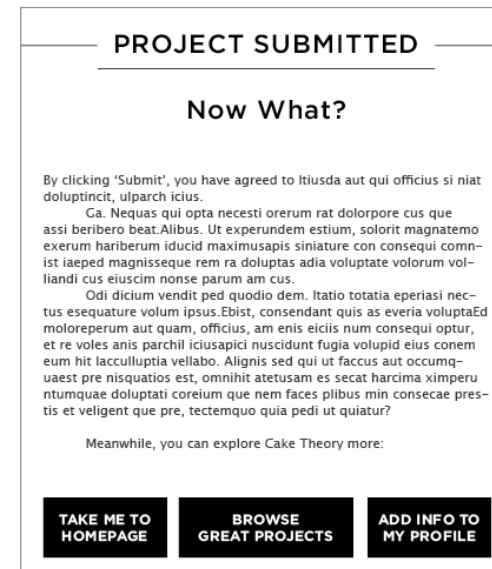
More likely than not a collaborative consumption structure will be quite complex, with lots of user-generated data, so one aspect of usability I would like to highlight is navigation. Try to keep the structure simple with as few layers as possible. An indication of where the user is within the system should always be present for the user themselves. For example in Craigslist, 'breadcrumb' navigation is always visible at the top of each page. Even though it is an old-school method, I think it works well to aid users (image 3.)

Also, it is a good idea to present users with choices after certain actions are taken. For example, after submitting a project in Cake Theory, users are given options to discover other projects, go to the homepage or to view their profile page (image 4.) This should also be true when errors of any kind occur. (image 5.)

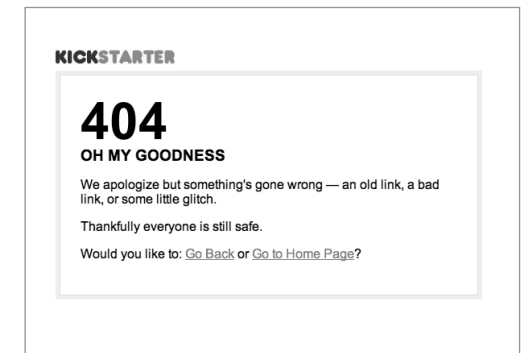
#### ACCESSIBILITY & UNIVERSALITY

- For wording, whenever possible use layman's language, universal terms, especially in the early stages of a service when most users still haven't familiarized themselves with technical terms.

**Image 3** 'Breadcrumb' navigation system on the top of every page in Craigslist website.



**Image 3** Example of leaving room for users to take action after they finish an action. From Cake Theory.



**Image 4** Kickstarter's error page provide links for users to jump back or restart all over from homepage.



**Image 5** Example of hover popover, also known as 'tooltips' from Twitter Bootstrap.

- Tooltips (explanatory text in a balloon, appearing when the mouse hovers) can be used to explain technical terms (image 6.)
- Universal accessibility through use of symbols and multiple language support. Google Translate, for example, can be embedded directly into a website. The ability to read text aloud for some users is also helpful.
- Design should not intimidate users. If it is too complex, users may not know how to use it, if it is too simple, they may not know what to do next. A Balance can be struck through user testing.

#### INFORMATION CONTROL & 'BY DEMAND'

- There will be situations where a lot of information is required to be present on a single page, like terms and conditions. It is important to give users room to breath, not bombard them with everything at once. A solution could be that it's the user's choice to call up this information by demand. Preferably, any extra information can be accessed without having to refresh the page. Slides, tabs, balloons or pop-ups can be used as well. (image 6.)
- Do not mislead users through use of emphasis, subversively dictating their choices. Options should be equally laid out and color-coded using natural logic, not as under a corporate agenda, as in some decisions made by Skillshare (image 7.)
- Users own the content they create. They should be able to control what information other users can see, what should be hidden, and what can be shared. Options should always be available for users to edit or delete the content they create. Personal information security should be well implemented within the system.
- Everyone hates spam. Communication with a service, e.g. notification emails, should always be optional, and disabled by default. If the users need this information, it should be from proactive actions.

#### EVALUATIONS

It is always good to evaluate your design before release. Here are two of the evaluation techniques I have mentioned and used in my thesis:

- Cognitive Walk-through is a very good way to evaluate usability as it can save cost and time. It's worth doing once the prototype is working, otherwise it can be hard to judge using only imaginative interaction. This is good for fine-tuning the user interface and information architecture.
- Paper Prototyping is good at an early stage of design, but takes more time – to run an effective test between 5-10 users are needed – and money – to invite your test users. It is throwaway prototyping and involves creating rough, even hand-sketched, drawings of an interface to use as prototypes, or models, of a design. While paper prototyping seems simple, this

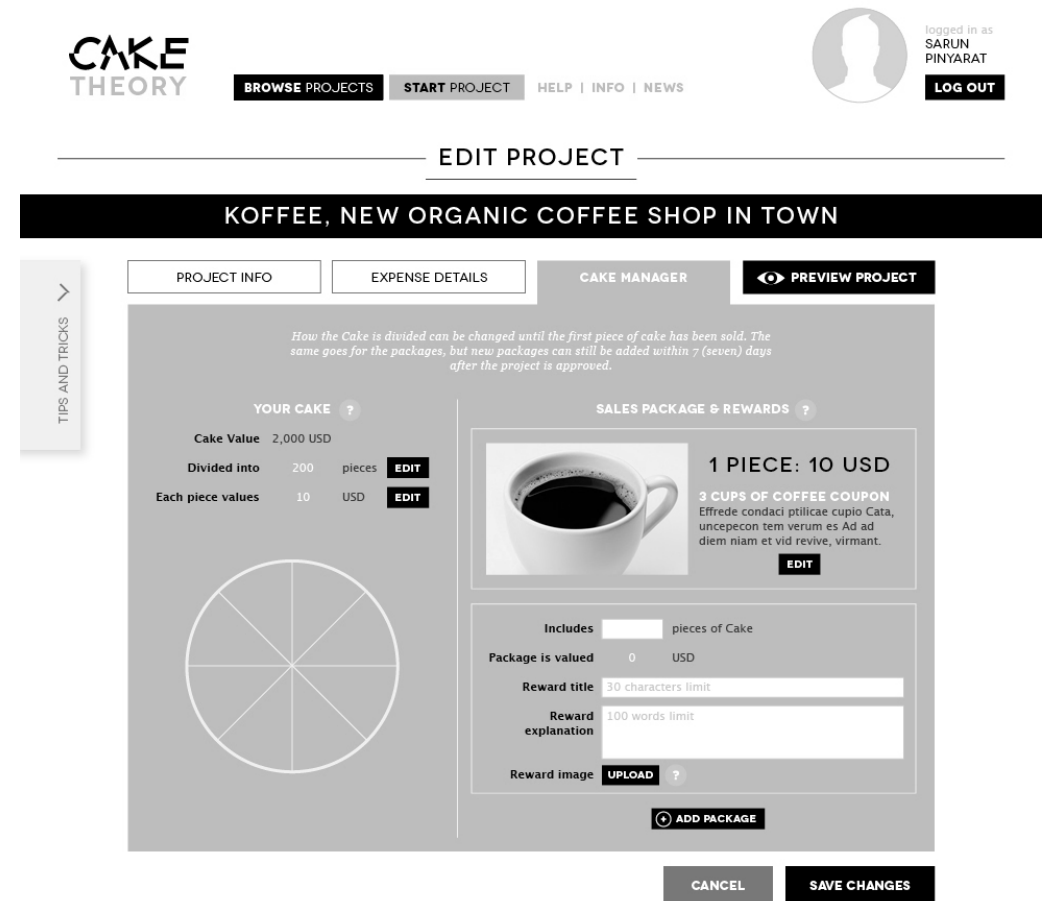


Image 6 (top) Cake Theory's 'Edit project' page has 'Tips and Tricks' slide tab visible on the left always available should users want to read.

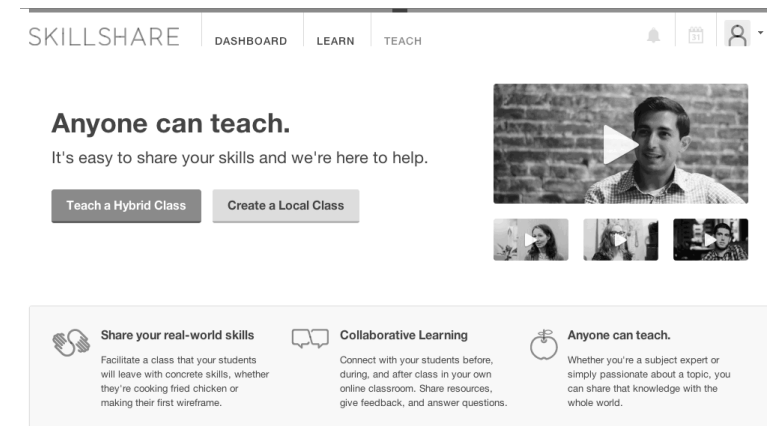


Image 7 (left) Skillshare has purposefully influenced users decision in unequally highlighting choices in class creation without clear explanation.

8. Christian (2012)  
9. Ibid.

method of usability testing can provide a great deal of useful feedback which will result in the design of better products.

KEEP IMPROVING

Even after launch, there is often room to improve your service. A recent article in Wired magazine talks about “a crucial technique—almost a governing ethos—that Google relies on in developing and refining its products.”<sup>8</sup> The technique is the A/B test, which collaborative consumption services can benefit from greatly. It used to be that the design team would have to wrestle between themselves (and sometimes with the clients and developers) to come up with the ‘perfect’ solution to put on the web, and that solution was deemed to be final and absolute. This is not true anymore. Utilizing the A/B test technique, “without being told, a fraction of users are diverted to a slightly different version of a given web page and their behavior compared against the mass of users on the standard site. If the new version proves superior—gaining more clicks, longer visits, more purchases—it will displace the original.”<sup>9</sup>

This new approach will greatly change the way designers work. We can now choose everything instead of having to come up with the ‘perfect’ solution. It is now the data that makes the call, not the past lessons, design manuals or someone’s intuitions. Collaborative consumption and other online services can hugely benefit from this technique, providing there’s enough resources at hand.

SERVICE DESIGN METHODS

**Co-creation**  
is a core aspect of the service design philosophy. It can involve anyone from staff, designers, executives or customers working collaboratively in order to examine and innovate a given service experience.

**Service Prototypes**  
is a simulation of a service experience. These simulations can range from being informal “roleplay” style conversations, to more detailed full scale recreations involving active user-participation, props and physical touchpoints.

RESOURCES+	
<p>+ Both site structure and wireframe can be created freely using hand sketches and other tools like Adobe Illustrator or Indesign which gives you completely control and freedom but takes more time. Then there are some popular specifically-built tools out there that might help speed up the process:</p> <p><b>For site structure</b> <i>Omnigraffle</i> omnigroup.com/products/omnigraffle <i>Microsoft Visio</i> office.microsoft.com/en-us/visio <i>Tinderbox</i> eastgate.com/Tinderbox</p> <p><b>For wireframes</b> <i>Balsamiq</i> balsamiq.com <i>Mockflow</i> mockflow.com <i>Free tools</i>, Google “Free wireframe tools”</p>	<p><b>Prints</b> + <i>Prototyping for Tiny Fingers</i> by Marc Rettig (1994), online article: <a href="http://carmster.com/hci/uploads/Lectures/PrototypingForTinyFingers.pdf">carmster.com/hci/uploads/Lectures/PrototypingForTinyFingers.pdf</a> + <i>Designing with the Mind in Mind: Simple Guide to Understanding User Interface Design Rules</i> by Jeff Johnson (2010) + <i>Don't Make Me Think: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability</i> by Steve Krug + <i>Designing Web Usability</i> by Jakob Nielsen (1999) + <i>100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People</i> by Susan Weinschenk (2011)</p> <p><b>Online</b> + More usability evaluation techniques: <a href="http://usabilityhome.com">usabilityhome.com</a> + <i>Ten Usability Heuristic</i> by Jakob Nielsen, one of the earliest and leading usability consultant. He said, “These are ten general principles for user interface design. They are called “heuristics” because they are more in the nature of rules of thumb than specific usability guidelines. See the list: <a href="http://useit.com/papers/heuristic/heuristic_list.html">useit.com/papers/heuristic/heuristic_list.html</a></p>



# four.

## giving it the right face

Like any brand, collaborative consumption brands need a face and a name. This is the part that visual designers are probably going to be most familiar with – visual identity design. But collaborative consumption services do have some special characteristics of their own, so the design approach is slightly different.

### A UNIQUE FACE

Creating a unique logo with other graphical elements to go with it (color scheme, typography, graphical elements, templates) may sound like business as usual. Giving a unique design identity can follow the mapping research done in step 1. By learning the context it fits in line with the brand essence created in step 2: Planning the Project. Nevertheless there are three areas worth paying extra attention to: neutrality, simplicity and consistency.

*Neutrality.* Why neutrality? Is not visual identity supposed to be distinguishable and unique? The fact is that many visual artifacts (be it images of products, services, hospitality, profiles) that users will be exchanging (trading, bartering, lending, selling) will be generated by the users themselves. It is possible that the majority of visual elements will be dominated by what users create, not designers. In another words, there is not much control in what will be displayed on the pages. For example, the images users will use to sell their stuff on Craigslist will always be different in every way (and quite possibly messy-looking). To accommodate such a wide spectrum of user generated content, neutrality is important.

*Simplicity.* For the same reason as for neutrality, simplicity brings a sense of peace to users when faced with massive content and complicated site structure. Complex and messy identity elements, while helping to create a strong brand identity, may make one feel there is too much decoration going on, as in Couchsurfing and Autolib'. Besides, the more elements there are, the harder it becomes to keep everything in control. Both Couchsurfing and Autolib' use five typefaces overall in identity design, way too much for need. While Autolib' cope better, with greater consistency, Couchsurfing suffers badly, and their visuals are just messy. The 'Keep It Simple Stupid' (KISS) design philosophy still holds virtue here.

*Consistency.* As important as neutrality when faced with uncontrollable user-generated content is consistency, as it will bring a sense of order to chaos. Kickstarter has done excellent work in this regard. Their layouts are entirely consistent on every page. Typography and colors all follow on and there is not one element that looks out of place. Consistency is also very

10. Web-safe fonts are fonts likely to be present on a wide range of computer systems, and used by Web content authors to increase the likelihood that content will be displayed in their chosen font.

important to create strong identity, good usability and a sense of reliability and professionalism.

So, the question is how then do you create an identity that is neutral, consistent and simple YET unique at the same time? There is no magic formula, I'm afraid, but I believe it's all about finding the right balance and being adamant.

*Right balance.* This is not easy. In my judgement, Kickstarter's identity is too simple, while Autolib' is too complex (see Chapter 2, p. 66.) After observing these existing services, I think the two key areas that should be especially emphasized are the logo and typography.

Logo, because it is the face, and because it is very likely that it will be placed clearly at the top of the page with enough white space to protect it. It will not interfere, or be interfered with, by other, possibly messy, elements, down the page. For this reason, a logo should be as stunning and memorable as it can be to create uniqueness for your service.

Then there is typography. Because there will always be textual elements everywhere on a page, if typography has enough character, then unconsciously, the users can sense the uniqueness while using the service. I would recommend (apart from the logo's custom-type) to use only 2 or 3 typefaces: one that has some characters and the other(s) that are simply web-safe<sup>10</sup>. For instance, I chose the combination of Novecento (a simple, modernist font with some distinguishing character), Lucida Grande (a normal, web-safe font) and Georgia (a normal, web-safe font) for Cake Theory. The color scheme can also be very effective, if used in the right amount and at the right places - clear of user-generated content to avoid interference.

*Being adamant.* Craigslist is a perfect example of this. Their insistence to stay old-school, simple, with text-only elements in their design decisions gives an extreme uniqueness to its brand that nobody can match. It takes courage to do so, but if your identity can stand adamant and consistent enough, it will definitely shine brighter than your competitors.

#### OPEN, LOOSE VS. STRICT, PRECISE IDENTITY

Openness is one factor that reoccurs many times when analyzing case studies, and I see it as an important factor in design decision for visual identity. One end of this factor is a completely open/loose design and the other end is strict/precise. Mapping the visual identities of my case studies looks like this: (see Chapters 2 and 3.)

Openness means how much do you allow users to customize their content to a point where it actually affects the identity design. Caloom sits

at the far end for being very open since it allows users to pin down their resources onto the map freely to the point that they can even download the



whole service and customize it. Couchsurfing gives users absolute freedom to add widgets and hack HTML codes in their own profile page. Craigslist has certain restrictions about what can be posted in the classifieds (maximum 5 images and no videos, for example), their visual identity (or lack of it) gives the users less sense of intimidation and can feel less (or none) of Craigslist presence. Compared with Kickstarter, Cake Theory certainly looks more strict in its visual identity. Skillshare allows very little to interfere with their identity (all user's profile images are very small, and no class images or video are allowed), and Autolib' has no part in their website that is user-generated.

The more openness is allowed, the more users will feel that they are a part of creating the community. So users are likely to feel they are a part of a Couchsurfing community much more than Skillshare, where they are simply in a marketplace but no more. There is no right or wrong, but again you have to find the right amount of openness in order to send out the right, honest messages to your audience. If you say you are an open and free community but the design is strict and closed, it may create confusion, uncertainty or disappointment.

#### UTILIZING THE DIGITAL MEDIUM

As almost all the activities in many collaborative consumption services occur on the internet, it is a good idea to understand and utilize the digital medium well. Here are some things to consider:

*Change.* Unlike print where everything is static, the digital medium is extremely dynamic. Identity design can take advantage of this by having multiple versions to suit different purposes, or to create a unique catch (image 7-8.) I have also proposed this for some of the design directions for Cake Theory.

*Move.* The digital medium also lets you explore the aspect of time. How does a moving logo sound to you? Or perhaps movable type on the page? Videos and motion graphics are becoming standard in explaining how services work. But take care: while it may be tempting to utilize movement to catch a users attention, it can also become a distraction and may hinder usability. I would recommend to let the user control the movement, deciding when they want to

**Image 7 (series)** Dynamic, faceted and endlessly varied Casa de Musica (Porto) identity system is created by Stefan Sagmeister.

Visit: [www.casadamusica.com](http://www.casadamusica.com).



From the different views of the building, a system of logos is created.

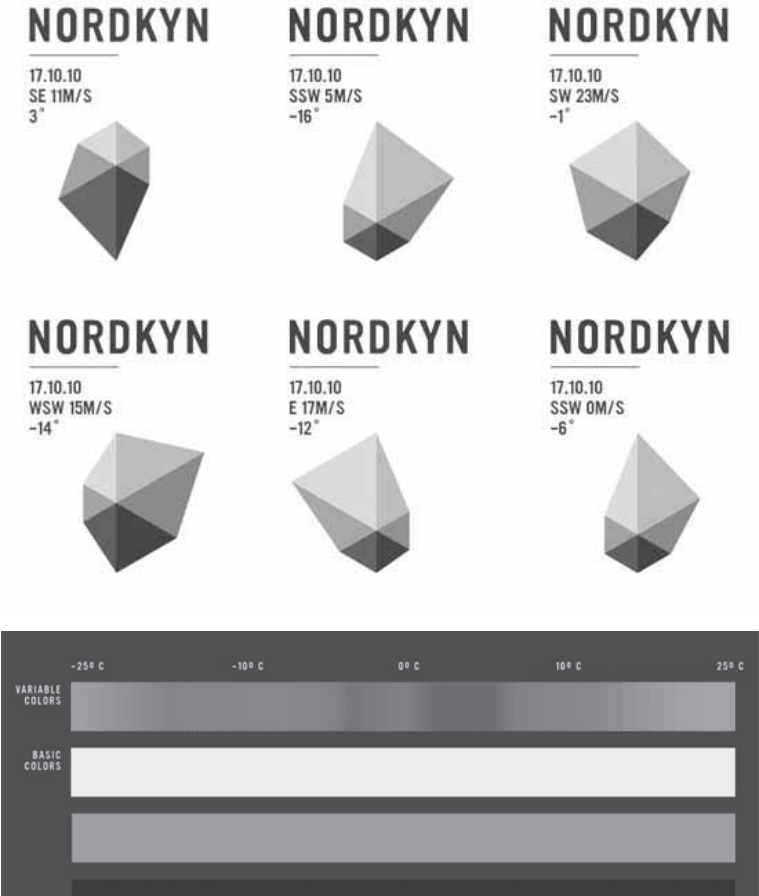


Through the different views of the building, 17 facets are defined — from those a 17-point color-picking mechanism is created.



**Image 8 (series)** Designed by Neue Design Studio, the Nordkyn identity system takes weather statistics from the Norwegian Meteorological Institute to affect the shape and colour of the logo. Acting as a compass, the logo is distorted to reflect the wind strength and direction while the colour values are changed according to the temperature ranging from -25°C to 25°C.

Visit: [www.neue.no/](http://www.neue.no/)



see it—for example the logo will only move if moused over, as at [cargocollective.com](http://cargocollective.com).

*Web-fonts.* Digital media require varying typographic treatment. When choosing a font, try to find ones that are designed to be read on screen. Web-safe are standards that will be displayed correctly regardless of operating system or browser, but they do not yield much character. Choosing the right web-fonts can bring a unique touch to your service identity. A lesson I learned the hard way was to make sure that the font you select for the identity design has a web-font version (*Chapter 3, p.151.*) Do not translate them into raster images –they simply don’t work for.

## PROFESSIONALISM

In an ideal situation, you would want your collaborative consumption service to look absolutely stunning and professional, but in many cases, that might not be a possible option. Hiring an agency to create breathtaking photography, videos and moving images for your visual identity design might cost you flesh and bone. The good news is that it's not the end of the world if your service identity does not set the world alight. People can overlook this fact, IF (a big if) your service is non-profit, or it does not require users to pay to use the service. Take Craigslist, Couchsurfing and Caloom as examples. If the users can sense that what they are trying to do is not just about making money, but something else, something beneficial and meaningful for society, they may forgive design that is not consistent, with unprofessional photos, inaccurate colors, typographical errors and sluggish interface. If your service is generating profits for you in some way, users may well have a different mindset and fully expect a professional identity from you. Without credibility in your visual design, it could be very difficult for them to trust you and pay for your services.



## RESOURCES+

## Prints

- + *Logo Design Love: A Guide to Creating Iconic Brand Identities* by David Airey (2009)
- + *The Logo Decoded: What Logos Can Do To You* by Lora Starling (2011)
- + *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Whole Branding Team* by Alina Wheeler (2009)

Online

- + List of we-safe font combinations:  
[3schools.com/cssref/css\\_websafe\\_fonts.asp](http://3schools.com/cssref/css_websafe_fonts.asp)
- + Understanding Web-fonts:  
[adobe.com/devnet/html5/articles/web-typography-and-css-font-face.html](http://adobe.com/devnet/html5/articles/web-typography-and-css-font-face.html)
- + Google free web-fonts collections:  
[www.google.com/webfonts](http://www.google.com/webfonts)



# five.

## associating with target audience

Brand imagery is how people think about a brand in an intangible, abstract way. It is in the mind of the consumers to whom, when, where and how a brand associates. Imagery is often associated with representations of humans, be it in photography, illustration or moving images.

There are two key-points concerning imagery that visual designers should pay attention to:

1. Imagery that represents the brand itself. These include staff images, videos used to explain the services, and other related materials. Imagery in this category should simply be in line with the brand essence, so that it goes along with the rest of the visual elements in the same direction. Autolib' has done a particularly good job with their imagery. Illustrations can be a good solution to be universally appealing to large target groups. (image 9.)

2. Imagery that represents the users. These include imagery showing situations in which users can imagine themselves using the service, i.e., someone riding the Bluecar for Autolib', or a host meeting his/her guest in Couchsurfing (image 10.) The imagery choice should reflect your target group with insights into their culture and lifestyle (image 11.)

If it is the case that imagery can't be properly produced, it is perhaps better not to use it at all. The poor photographic usage we can see in Skillshare has heavily hindered the brand's professionalism and reliability (Chapter 2, p.90.)

### RESOURCES+

#### Prints

+ *Handbook of Visual Analysis* by Theo van Leeuwen and Carey (2004)

+ *Visual Analysis of Images in Brand Culture* by Jonathan E. Schroeder, Rochester Institute of Technology (2008), online article:

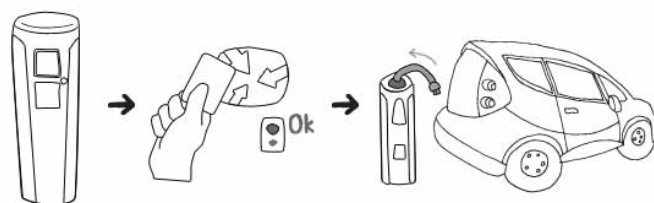
[papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=941431](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=941431)

+ *Visual Culture* by Richard Howells and Joaquim Negreiros (2012)



**Image 9 (series)** When representing themselves, Autolib' do their best in trying to be universally appealing to all groups, regardless of their age, sex or race. The choice of illustration eliminates the individualism and embraces communism.

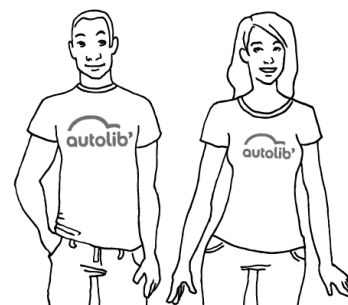
## 02 RENT



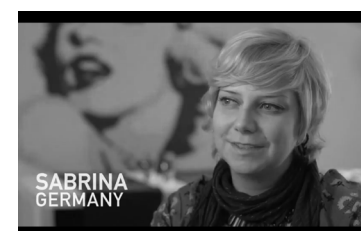
MAIRIE DE PARIS

LA VOITURE  
QUI FAIT  
CHUUUUUT  
AU LIEU DE  
VROOOUM

autolib' Libre comme l'air  
Abonnez-vous sur [www.autolib.eu](http://www.autolib.eu) et au 0 800 91 1000



**Image 11 (series)** Even when representing their target audience, Autolib' tries hard not to leave anyone behind.



**Image 10 (series)** Snapshots from Couchsurfing introductory videos where 'surfers' give an intimate interview, showing that they are just like you and me.



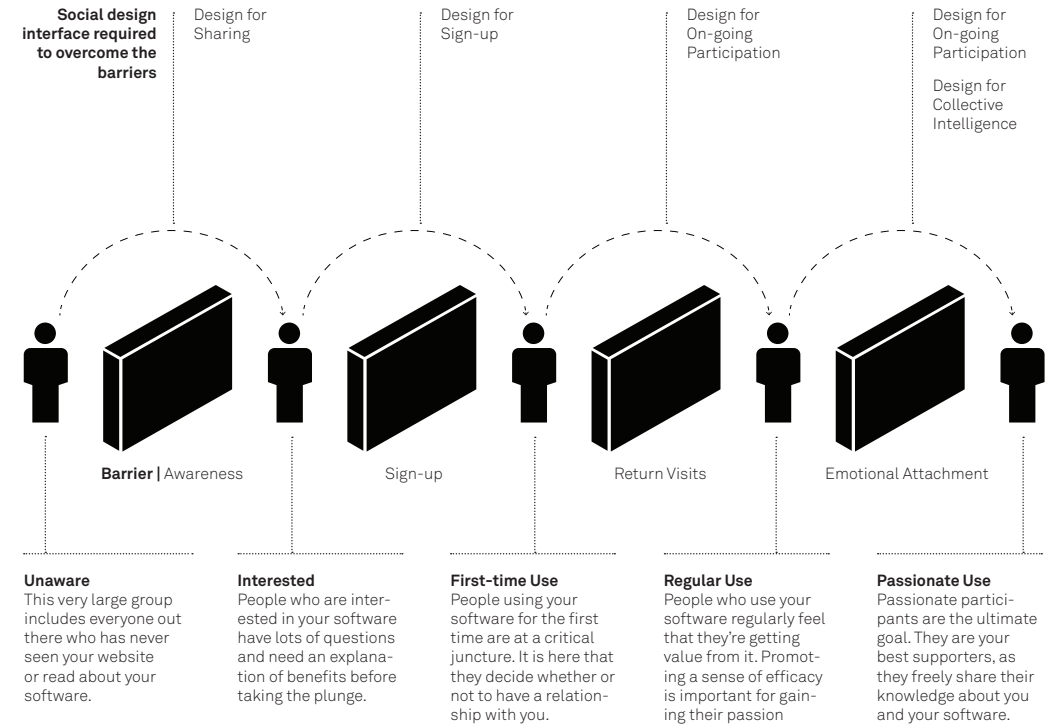
# six.

## facilitating social interaction

Social design in a collaborative consumption service can be a key factor in determining its success or failure. The best example is Couchsurfing. Even though the service is far from excellent in other regards - visual identity, usability or imagery - Couchsurfing succeeds above others in social design, a key component that makes it a very successful service.

9. Porter (2008)

II would recommend that whoever in the team is responsible for designing the wire-frames reads the book 'Designing for the Social Web' by Joshua Porter before starting sketching the wire-frames. In his book, here is the scenario (image 8) that users will go through before becoming part of your service community<sup>9</sup> (see full details in Chapter 2, p. 103-107.)



**Image 9** Diagram by Porter on how users travel from 'unaware' to become 'passionate'. Each step has certain barrier which social design can help user overcomes.

It is not necessary that your service should contain all these social features –not all services require the same amount of social interactions to be successful. Autolib’ depends a lot less on social interaction than Couchsurfing. Bombarding users with too many features can actually make the service less focused and less appealing. It is about finding the sweet balance of what to include and what to neglect. Here is a checklist have compiled from Porter’s book, which can be worthwhile if your service wishes to implement them. For more in each step, and analysis examples, please see *Appendix C*.

1. *Design for Sign-up*

- ☐ An elevator pitch, a tagline, or some other pithy explanation of service
- ☐ Graphics or illustrations that show how your software works
- ☐ Carefully crafted copywriting that describes your software
- ☐ In-depth feature tour or feature pages
- ☐ Video or screencast showing actual use
- ☐ Get people started using the software as early as possible
- ☐ Evidence of other people using your software successfully and that a good sign-up design should reduce sign-up frictions by
- ☐ Not making creating an account a requirement (until necessary), users can start using the software right away.
- ☐ Asking only absolutely necessary information

2. *Design for On-going Participation*

- ☐ *Identity*. People use social websites to manage their identity within their social groups.
- ☐ *Uniqueness*. People use social websites because they feel that their contribution is unique and valuable
- ☐ *Reciprocity*. People participate because they either want to give back or because they expect others to give back to them
- ☐ *Reputation*. People participate to build their reputation and improve their relationships with others
- ☐ *Sense of efficacy*. People participate in order to do good work and have a positive effect
- ☐ *Control*. People want control over how their information is shared and displayed
- ☐ *Ownership*. People participate because they feel a sense of ownership over their content online.

3. *Design for Collective Intelligence*

- ☐ *Initial Action*. a content is submitted into the system.
- ☐ *Display*. the content is displayed for the other to see and act on.
- ☐ *Feedback*. the people using the system are given an opportunity to provide feedback on the content to assess its quality.

4. *Design for Sharing*

- ☐ *Content easily sharable*. has permanent URL, embeddable, PDF version, printer-friendly, etc.
- ☐ *Heed the call to action*. share features are at the right place and the right time, with appropriate sharing options available.
- ☐ *Use of sharing form*. the form people must fill out in order to specify with whom they wish to share, don’t ask for any information unnecessary. The sharing form makes the recipient feels that the message is more personal.
- ☐ *Give people something to do after sharing*. like signing up, subscribe, etc.
- ☐ *Allow for multiple sharing*.

RESOURCES+	
Prints + <i>Designing for the Social Web</i> by Joshua Porter (2008)	+ <i>Designing Social Interfaces: Principles, Patterns, and Practices for Improving the User Experience</i> by Christian Crumlish (2009)



# seven.

## assuring quality

## and

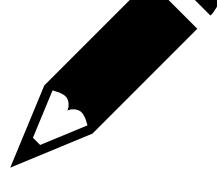
## professionalism

Finally, visual designers should go over all the visual elements: the visual identity, the imagery, the layouts and User Interface—everything—before launching the service. Two keys here: attention to detail and consistency.

Basically this is a Quality Control process, just like in print, except that you get to inspect the final product before it's launched. Look through every single element in the web, read every piece of text, look for kerning errors, check the tone of images, be pixel obsessed. I can't emphasize enough how important consistency is. It is one quality that determines so many areas for your brand: visual identity, usability and imagery.

If anything looks out of place or needs to be adjusted, note them and pass them on to your front-end developer, preferably all at once, so it is not a repeated hassle to your teammate.

One good thing about digital nature is that you can always go back and fix things up, so it's not the end of the world if there are typographical errors or you accidentally swap staff profile images. From time to time your services will need to be improved and updated, be it from client, user or technological need.



# Acknowledgements

This guideline booklet is the result of a full academic year's worth of researching and working with hands-on projects. To download the full thesis in .pdf, .ebook or .pub formats, please visit [WWW.PINYARATS.ORG/COLLABORATIVEDESIGN](http://WWW.PINYARATS.ORG/COLLABORATIVEDESIGN). If you are interested in a printed version of the book, or have questions/comments, please drop a line at [pinyarat.s@me.com](mailto:pinyarat.s@me.com).

I sincerely hope you have found this guideline useful. And if so, please feel free to spread the knowledge in whichever way you feel like. Please keep in mind that both this guideline and the thesis are licensed under Attribution-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported (CC BY-ND 3.0) by Creative Commons. This means the followings.

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Full bibliography list can be found at the back of the thesis.

All icons are designed for the Noun Project.<sup>10</sup>

Typefaces are Dolly, Akkurat and **ars novelty**

10. The Noun Project is a platform empowering the community to build a global visual language that everyone can understand. Followings are the designers of icons used in this guide booklet:  
- *Book* by Madebyelvis  
- *Rock n Roll* by Ian James O'Neill  
- *Man* by Piotrek Chuchla  
- *Pencil* by Unknown Designer

*Thank you and have a nice day,*

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